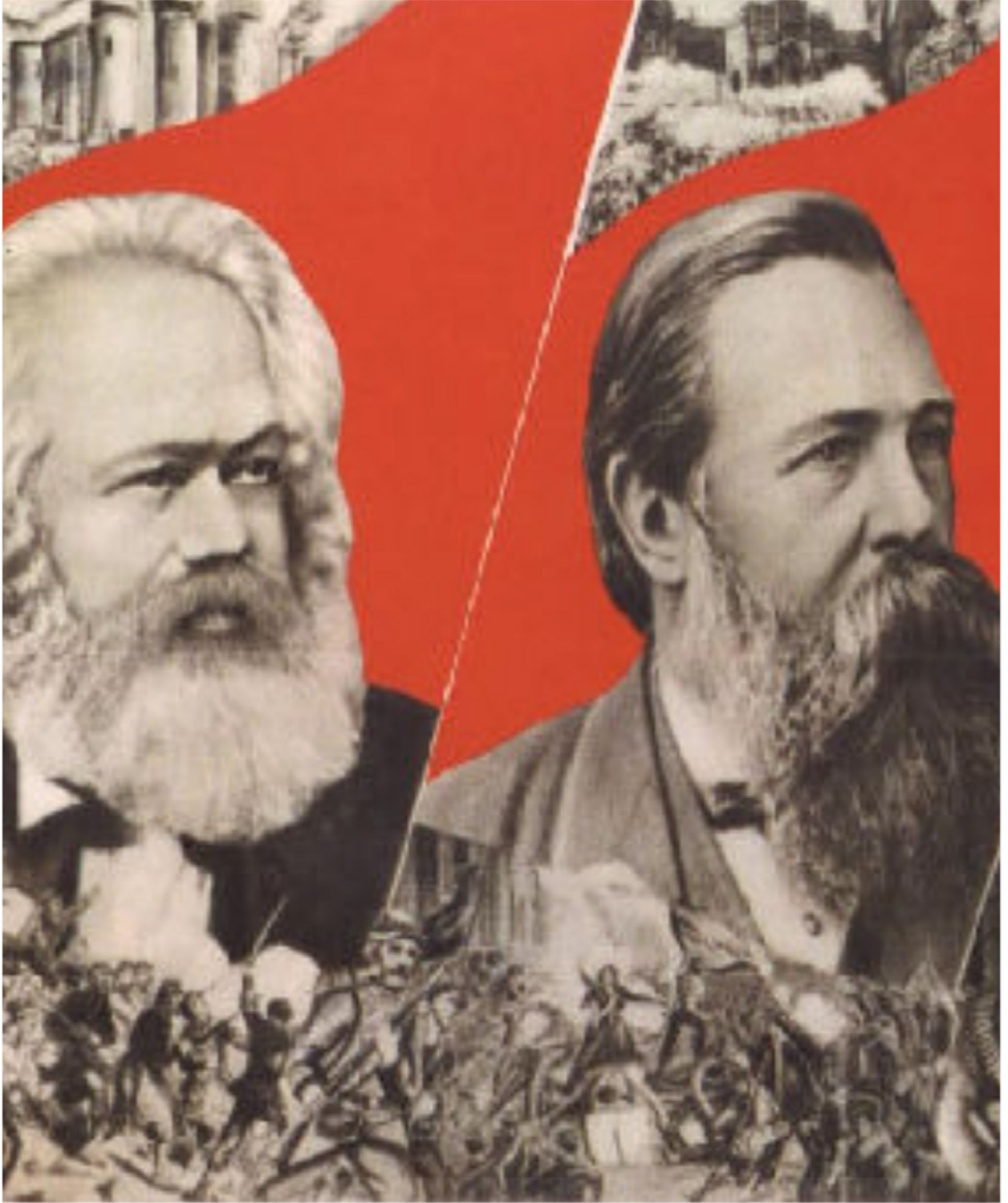


# ON BUREAUCRACY



Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin

Erdogan A

# Selected Writings On Bureaucracy

Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Enver Hoxha, Kollontai

Erdogan A

## **Contents**

Karl Marx, From Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right - P22

Karl Marx, in Neue Rheinische Zeitung - P31

Engels, Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany – P39

Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. - P41

Karl Marx, The Civil War in France – P43

Engels, From The Prussian Military Question and the German Workers' Party – P44

Marx and Engels, “Stirner” Delighted in His Construction – P48

Frederick Engels, The Housing Question – P50

Lenin, From; The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats – P51

Lenin, From; One Step Forward, Two Steps Back – P53

Lenin, Old and New – P60

Lenin, Controversial Issues – P65

Lenin, What the Counter-Revolutionary Steps of the Provisional Government Lead To – P70

Lenin, From State and Revolution – P74

Lenin, To: The All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions -P78

Lenin, From; The Party Crisis – P79

Lenin, To: G. Y. Sokolnikov – P81

Lenin, From; To: A. D. Tsyurupa – P83

Stalin, From; Three years of Proletarian Dictatorship – P85

Stalin, From; The Party's Tasks – P85

Stalin, From; The Discussion, Rafail, the Articles by Preobrazhensky and Sapronov, and Trotsky's Letter – P88

Stalin, Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B) – P95

Stalin, The Results of the 13th Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) - P106

Stalin, From; The Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) -P109

Stalin, From; Questions and Answers – P112

Stalin, from; Reply to the Discussion on the Report on “The Social-Democratic Deviation in our Party” – P114

Stalin, From; The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.(B.) – P118

Stalin, The Opposition Bloc in the C.P.S.U.(B.) - P128

Stalin, From; The Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) – P146

Stalin, from; Speech Delivered at the Eighth Congress of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League - P151

Stalin, Against Vulgarizing the Slogan of Self-Criticism - P156

Stalin, Letter to the Members of the Party Affairs Study Circle at the Communist Academy – P167

Stalin, The Right Danger in the C.P.S.U.(B.) – P170

Stalin, From; Political Report of the CC to the 16th Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) – P186

Stalin, The Importance & Tasks of the Complaints-Bureaus- P191

Stalin, From; Report to the Seventeenth Party Congress on the Work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) – P193

Kollontai, The Workers Opposition, On Bureaucracy – P205

Enver Hoxha, Yugoslav “Self-Administration” – P223

## Introduction

**“an apparatus for policy** (=reviewing and correcting relations between classes), and **not a policy for the apparatus!**

**(A good) bureaucracy in the service of policy, and not a policy in the service of (a good) bureaucracy.”** *Lenin, Notes for a Speech at the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of The, Collected Works, Volume 36, pages 535-537.*

As in most terms used in order to confuse the minds and throw dirt on the Soviets and the Stalin, the term bureaucracy has been used for the same purpose. Bourgeois liberals, right opportunists used the term in its bourgeois context borrowed from and in aligned with the Trotskyites distortion, left opportunists used it in its anarchistic, anarcho-Trotskyites context. It is not surprising that both right and left opportunist borrow from Trotskyites, for Trotskyism is the mixture of both.

Being two sides of the same coin, in essence, both sides are the enemy of socialism with “socialist` mask.” **An old and often repeated objection to socialism”** says Lenin,” is that socialism means “barracks for the masses” and **“mass bureaucracy”**”. *Lenin, The Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), APRIL 24–29, 1917*

Bureaucracy, as Marx takes up Hegels definition; “executive is **nothing but the administration, which he develops as the bureaucracy...** The official function is the **duty and the life's work of the civil servants...** indeed, **the bureaucracy is merely the formalism of a content** which lies outside the bureaucracy itself... **The bureaucracy is the state formalism of civil society...** The **bureaucrats** are the Jesuits and **theologians of the state...** The **aims of the state** are transformed into **aims of bureaus,** or

the **aims of bureaus into the aims of the state**. The **bureaucracy** is a circle from which **no one can escape**. Its **hierarchy is a hierarchy of knowledge....** The **abolition of the bureaucracy** can consist only in the **universal interest becoming really particular interest**; and **this is possible only** through the particular interest really **becoming universal.**" *Karl Marx, 1843*

*From Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*

Lenin defines as **"the civil service, the bureaucracy**, as representing a special category of persons who specialise in the work of administration and **occupy a privileged position as compared with the people**. We see this institution everywhere, from autocratic and semi-Asiatic Russia to cultured, free and civilised England, as **an essential organ of bourgeois society.**" *Lenin, From, The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*

Bureaucracy - officialdom, Bureaucrats – administrators has a history goes back to old monarchy, feudal systems. Explaining the first appearance and its class base, Lenin says that **" the bureaucracy was the first political instrument of the bourgeoisie against the feudal lords**, and against the representatives of the "old-nobility" system in general, and marked the **first appearance in the arena of political rule of people who were not high-born landowners**, but commoners, **"middle class"** and from the very conditions of the formation and recruitment of **this class, which is open only to bourgeois "offspring of the people," and is connected with that bourgeoisie by thousands of strong ties. .... every bureaucracy, by its historical origin, its contemporary source, and its purpose, is purely and exclusively a bourgeois institution"** *Lenin, The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of it in Mr. Struve's Book, (The Reflection of Marxism in Bourgeois Literature)*

Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism, the bureaucracy remains an administrative arm of the ruling class as Lenin puts it; "in a capitalist state which is centralized, **not by the arbitrary will of the bureaucracy**, but by the **inexorable demands of economic development**, that organisation must find expression in a **single force** welded together throughout the state." *Lenin, The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907, Local Self-Government as a "Bulwark Against Reaction"*

As Engels gives a particular example "where the bourgeoisie was, politically, far less educated, the **Liberal bureaucracy walked into office, and professed to hold power in trust for them**. We have further seen, how the parties and classes of society, that were heretofore all united in opposition to the old government, got divided among themselves after the victory, or even during the struggle; and how that same Liberal bourgeoisie that alone profited from the victory turned round immediately upon its allies of yesterday, assumed a hostile attitude **against every class or party of a more advanced character**, and concluded an **alliance with the conquered feudal and bureaucratic interests**." *Frederick Engels, Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany*

Marx giving another example "under Napoleon, **the bureaucracy was only the means of preparing the class rule of the bourgeoisie**. Under the Restoration, under Louis Philippe, under the parliamentary republic, **it was the instrument of the ruling class**." *Karl Marx, From The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*.

Although bureaucracy obtains its motives from the bourgeoisie, but its action is with a tendency and a form that is purely and solely feudal". Lenin explains this as following;

“Only people who have never given a thought to the new brought by the first decade of the twentieth century, who understand nothing about the **interdependence between the economic and the political relations....**But it is not enough to concede that the connection exists, it is necessary to point out **what exactly is the actual nature of this connection.** The step taken toward the **transformation into something new by no means eliminates the old**, say, “bureaucratic” regime with its vast self-sufficiency and independence, with its “peculiar nature” .., and with its uncontrolled finances.....While it **“obtains the motives** for its activity” largely from the upper ranks of the bourgeoisie the bureaucracy lends its bourgeois activity **a tendency and a form that is purely and solely feudal.**’ *Lenin, Plan Of The Pamphlet, The Tax In Kind*

Anarchist utopia that expects the building of socialism in the morning of revolution and withering away of state in the following days, expects the self-administration of the masses – meaning the elimination of bureaucracy – officialdom. What is destroyed with the bourgeois state **is the bourgeois bureaucracy.** As Stalin explains; “with the abolition of the **old apparatus of state administration, bureaucracy was smashed, but the bureaucrats remained.**” *Stalin, Speech at the Opening of the, First All-Russian Conference of Responsible Personnel of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspection, October 15, 1920*

Lenin’s words “**Do not defend but rectify the bureaucratic excesses.** The fight against bureaucracy **is a long and arduous one**” tells more in one sentence than a thousand page academic book with terms only the writer can understand.

Since the **transformation into something new by no means eliminated the old**” in all aspects, and especially the old

**bureaucrats remained** and the class struggle against the bourgeois remnant continues, the other question is related to combining this struggle with the struggle against bourgeois bureaucrats. As Lenin puts it;

**“control over the capitalists is impossible if it remains bureaucratic,** for the bureaucracy is itself bound to and interwoven with the bourgeoisie by thousands of threads.  
*“Lenin, The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It*

And thus;

**“it is clear that the old executive apparatus, the bureaucracy, which is connected with the bourgeoisie,** would simply be unfit to carry out the orders of the proletarian state.” *Lenin, State and Revolution Housing Question*

As Stalin puts it bluntly and sincerely;

**“our state apparatus, which is bureaucratic to a considerable degree,** exerts a certain amount of pressure on the Party and the Party workers. **In 1917,** when we were forging ahead, towards October, **we imagined** that we would have a Commune, a free association of working people, that we would put an end to bureaucracy in government institutions, and that it would be possible, **if not in the immediate period, then within two or three short periods,** to transform the state into a free association of working people. **Practice has shown, however, that this is still an ideal which is a long way off,** that to rid the state of the elements of bureaucracy, to transform Soviet society into a free association of working people, **the people must have a high level of culture, peace conditions must be fully guaranteed all around us** so as to remove the necessity

**of maintaining a large standing army, which entails heavy expenditure and cumbersome administrative departments, the very existence of which leaves its impress upon all the other state institutions. Our state apparatus is bureaucratic to a considerable degree, and it will remain so for a long time to come”** *Stalin; The Party’s Tasks*

This confirms Marx’s and Lenin’s assessment that **“the transformation into something new by no means eliminates the old”** in all aspects overnight. Like the bureaucracy from feudal society remained and changed in context after the bourgeois revolution, some of the “old”, like “state” and “bureaucracy” will remain in different class context and form till the transition to communist society in its scientific meaning -at its higher stage. Lenin puts this fact bluntly by saying that **“The economic foundations for the withering away of the state”**: in this case we also have the **“economic foundations” for the withering away of bureaucracy,”** *Lenin, Plan of The Pamphlet, The Tax in Kind*

Stalin, repeating marks and Lenin puts the question and solution at the fifteenth congress;

“The Party’s task is to continue along the line of isolating the new bourgeoisie and to strengthen the bond between the working class and the working Soviet intelligentsia in town and country.

d) The state apparatus and the struggle against bureaucracy. So much is being said about bureaucracy that there is no need to dilate on it. That **elements of bureaucracy exist in our state, co-operative and Party apparatus, there can be no doubt. That it is necessary to combat the elements of bureaucracy, and that this task**

**will confront us all the time, as long as we have state power, as long as the state exists, is also a fact."** *Stalin, The Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*

The question is not only a question of state – from top down, but of masses -bottom up. As Stalin states," **It will be impossible** to reform the state apparatus, to alter it thoroughly, **to expel elements of bureaucracy** and corruption from it and to make it near and dear to the broad masses **unless the masses themselves** render the state apparatus constant and active assistance. But **on the other hand**, active and continuous assistance of the masses is impossible unless the best elements of the workers and peasants are drawn into the organs of government, **unless direct and close connection** is established between the state apparatus and the "rank and file" of the toiling masses." *Stalin, Questions and Answers*

Only the opportunist kinship of right and left use the **terms in its bourgeois meaning and context** disregarding the fundamental differences after "the transformation to the new "and "the struggle waged, precautions and steps taken in **preparation of the foundation for its withering away.**

What is purposely overlooked and never mentioned is that unlike in bourgeois society, in socialist society - the bureaucrats - all officials and every kind of all deputies are **not only elected by the workers**, but **displaceable by them** at any moment. The salaries of bureaucrats **do not exceed** that of a competent worker.

"Officials" says Lenin "**appointed" from above** to "direct" the local population **have always been** a sure step towards the restoration... **What the people need is** a really democratic, workers' and peasants' republic, whose **authorities have been elected by the people** and are **displaceable by the people** any

time they may wish it." *Lenin, What the Counter-Revolutionary Steps of the Provisional Government Lead To*

In general, as Marx asks the question "What is the "social question" as understood by the civil servant?" and responds; **"It is the maintenance of his salary and his present position, which is superior to the people... ambitious professors, lawyers and similar persons, who can only hope to obtain respectable posts in a state where betrayal of the people's interests to the government is a lucrative business."** *Marx in Neue Rheinische Zeitung*

As Engels well explains for the capitalist society "The bureaucracy is beginning more and more **to despise embezzlement as the sole means of improving its income;** it is turning its back on the state and beginning to hunt after the far more lucrative posts **on the administration of industrial enterprises."** *Frederick Engels, The Housing Question*

**"Tendency to become bureaucrats, i.e., privileged persons divorced from the people and standing above the people."** Says Lenin, **"That is the essence of bureaucracy;** and until the capitalists have been expropriated and the bourgeoisie **overthrown, even proletarian functionaries will inevitably be "bureaucratized" to a certain extent."** *Lenin, State and Revolution*

In socialism where there is no industrial private enterprises and "embezzlement "is a risky business, Lenin states;

**"the bureaucracy, are either similarly replaced by the direct rule of the people themselves or at least placed under special control;** they not only become **elected officials,** but are also subject to recall at the people's first demand; **they are reduced to the position** of simple agents; from a privileged group holding "jobs"

remunerated on a high, bourgeois scale, **they become workers of a special “arm of the service”**, whose remuneration does not exceed the ordinary pay of a competent worker.” *Lenin, The Dual Power, Collected Works, Volume 24, pages 38-41.*

Thus, as opposed to the bourgeois context and class character of bureaucracy in where they were a class or strata, in socialist society where they are workers **of a special “arm of the service”**, the question is related to the approach and practice of “bureaucrats” in their “administrative” work in general and continuing struggle against the capitalist remnants , including the intelligencia in particular. As Lenin puts it:

“It is clear, I think, that the **cries about this celebrated** bureaucracy are **just a screen for dissatisfaction with** the personal composition of the central bodies, a fig-leaf **to cover up the violation of a pledge** solemnly given at the Congress. You are a **bureaucrat because you were appointed by the Congress** not in accordance with my wishes, but against them; you are a formalist because you take your stand on the formal decisions of the Congress, and **not on my consent**; you are acting in a grossly mechanical way because you cite the “mechanical” majority at the Party Congress and pay no heed to my wish to be co-opted; you are an autocrat because you refuse to hand over the power to the old snug little band who insist on their circle “continuity” all the more because they do not like the **explicit disapproval of this circle spirit by the Congress.**

These cries about bureaucracy have never had any real meaning except the one I have indicated.

They talk of bureaucracy. **The word bureaucracy might be translated into Russian as concentration on place and position. Bureaucracy means subordinating the interests of the work to the interests of one's own career; it means focusing attention on places and ignoring the work itself;** it means wrangling over co-optation instead of fighting for ideas. That **bureaucracy of this kind** is undesirable and detrimental to the Party is unquestionably true," *Lenin, One Step Forward, Two Steps Back, After the Congress. Two Methods of Struggle*

**"The characteristic feature of the present period" says Stalin, "is the intensification of the struggle between the capitalist countries and our country, on the one hand, and between the socialist elements and the capitalist elements within our country, on the other."** *Stalin, The Opposition Bloc in the C.P.S.U.(B.)*

And explains further;

**"The wrecking activities of the bourgeois intelligentsia are one of the most dangerous forms of resistance to developing socialism. ....what does the resistance offered by the capitalist elements of town and country to the socialist offensive represent?** It represents a regrouping of the forces of the class enemies of the proletariat for the purpose of defending the old against the new. It is not difficult to understand that these circumstances cannot but lead to an intensification of the class struggle. **But if we are to break the resistance of the class enemies and clear the way for the advance of socialism,** we must, besides everything else, give a sharp edge to all our organisations, **purge them of bureaucracy,** improve their cadres and mobilise the vast masses of the working class and labouring strata of the countryside

against the capitalist elements of town and country.”  
*Stalin, The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.(B.)*

Aside from the continuing class struggle, “The chief defect of these institutions “says Lenin “is that **they are overburdened with trivial matters**. As a result, **they are floundering in bureaucracy instead of fighting it**. “*Lenin, To: A. D. Tsyurupa*

It is clear that the question of “bureaucracy” during the phase of proletarian dictatorship-socialism has nothing to do **with its bourgeois contexts** but with the continuing class struggle and with the means and methods of -such as application of socialist ethics and norms, complains, criticism, self-criticism- preventing its hindering functions and preparation for its withering away. One striking example Lenin criticize;

“We must not delude ourselves **with lies**. That is harmful. **It is the main source of our bureaucracy...failure to study practical experience**. This is the root of all evil, and **the root of bureaucracy**.” *Lenin, To Comrade Molotov For The Members Of The Political Bureau, 16 March, 1922, Collected Works, Volume 33, pages 237-242*

And for self-criticism;

“We cannot do without **self-criticism**. We simply cannot...**Without it**, stagnation, corruption of the apparatus, **growth of bureaucracy**, sapping of the creative initiative of the working class, are inevitable. Of course, **self-criticism provides material for our enemies**. You are quite right about that. **But it also provides material (and a stimulus) for our advancement**, for unleashing the constructive energies of the working people, for the development of emulation, for shock

brigades, and so on. The negative aspect is counterbalanced and outweighed by the positive aspect.

“It is possible that our press gives too much prominence to our shortcomings, and sometimes even (involuntarily) advertises them. That is possible and even probable. And, of course, it is bad. You demand, therefore, that our shortcomings should be counterbalanced (I would say: outweighed) by our achievements. You are, of course, right about that too. We shall most certainly repair this defect, and without delay. You need have no doubt of that.” *Stalin, Letter to A. M. Gorky, January 17, 1930*

On the hindrance of bureaucracy in the industrial development Stalin says;

“what is required to make the policy of reducing industrial production costs and wholesale prices of commodities possible and quite practicable? For that **it is essential to have a radical improvement of the technology of production**, a radical improvement of the organisation of labour in the factories, a radical improvement and simplification of the entire economic apparatus and **a determined fight against bureaucracy in this apparatus.**” *Stalin, Speech Delivered at the Fifth-Union Conference of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League*

Analyzing the concept of Bureaucracy within the party organizations Lenin says;

“Perhaps **the only attempt to analyse the concept bureaucracy** is the distinction drawn in the new Iskra (No. 53) between the “**formal democratic principle**” and the “**formal bureaucratic principle**”. This distinction **contains a grain of truth. Bureaucracy versus democracy**

is in fact **centralism versus autonomism**; it is the organisational principle of revolutionary Social-Democracy as opposed to the organisational principle of opportunist Social-Democracy. The latter **strives to proceed from the bottom upward**, and, therefore, wherever possible and as far as possible, upholds autonomism and “democracy”, carried (by the overzealous) **to the point of anarchism**. The former strives to proceed **from the top downward** and upholds an extension of the rights and powers of the centre in relation to the parts. In the period of disunity and separate circles, this top from which revolutionary Social-Democracy strove to proceed organizationally **was inevitably one of the circles**, the one enjoying most influence by virtue of its activity and **its revolutionary consistency....** Thus you have, in a different environment, the same struggle between the opportunist and the revolutionary wing of the Party on the question of organisation, **the same conflict between autonomism and centralism, between democracy and “bureaucracy”**, between the tendency to relax and the tendency to tighten organisation and discipline, **between the mentality of the unstable intellectual** and that of the staunch proletarian, between intellectualist individualism and proletarian solidarity... **attempts to analyse and precisely define this detestable “bureaucracy” inevitably lead to autonomism**; attempts to “lend profundity” to their stand and vindicate it inevitably **lead to justifying backwardness, to tail-ism..”** *Lenin, One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*

Stalin takes the question of bureaucracy and struggle against it very seriously. **“If it were only a question of the old bureaucrats”** he says, **“the fight against bureaucracy would be**

**very easy.** The trouble is that it is not a matter of the old bureaucrats. It is a matter of the new bureaucrats, bureaucrats who sympathise with the Soviet Government, and finally, communist bureaucrats. **The communist bureaucrat is the most dangerous type of bureaucrat.** Why? Because he masks his bureaucracy with the title of Party member.” *Stalin, Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B)*

However, Stalin shows that he neither hides the facts of bureaucracy nor is he a utopian. He does not just point the question but points the solution. “Lenin’s slogan about the cultural revolution.’ He says, “The **surest** remedy for bureaucracy is raising the cultural level of the workers and peasants. One can curse and denounce bureaucracy in the state apparatus, one can stigmatize and pillory bureaucracy in our practical work, **but unless the masses of the workers reach a certain level of culture,** which will create the possibility, the desire, **the ability to control the state apparatus from below,** by the masses of the workers themselves, **bureaucracy will continue to exist in spite of everything.**” *Stalin, The Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*

In this respect for the initiated. bureau named “Complaints Bureau” Stalin says;

The work of the Complaints Bureaus is of tremendous importance in the struggle to remove shortcomings in our Party, Soviet, economic, trade-union and Komsomol apparatuses, in improving our administrative apparatus.

Lenin said that **without an apparatus we should have perished long ago, and that without a systematic, stubborn struggle to improve the apparatus we should certainly perish.** This means that resolute and systematic struggle against conservatism, bureaucracy and red tape

in our apparatus is an essential task of the Party, the working class and all the working people of our country.

The tremendous importance of the **Complaints Bureaus** consists in their being a serious means of carrying out Lenin's behest concerning the struggle to improve the apparatus. *"Stalin, The Importance and Tasks of the Complaints-Bureaus"*

In conclusion, aside from few criticism and self-criticism writings on the question, most writings are bourgeois and revisionist, anarchist, anti-Marxists writings banking on the ignorance and lack of historical, theoretical knowledge of the masses. Or at best utopian, anarchist writings by those who believes that after the political revolution, society will be transformed into the communist society overnight. In the proletarian state representative organs are real working institutions, built and acting as "...a working body, executive and legislative at the same time." *Marx*

And, "between capitalist and communist society lies **the period of the revolutionary transformation** of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which **the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.**"

"The political system of "**socialist self-administration**" has **not only nothing in common** with the dictatorship of the proletariat but is even opposed to it." *Marx*

As preparing the economic foundations for the withering away of the state is a precondition so is the "economic foundations for the withering away of bureaucracy," *Lenin, Plan of The Pamphlet, The Tax in Kind*

Anarchist, revisionist cries over (most commonly Stalinist') **"bureaucracy"** historically anti-Marxist disguised with insidious right and/or left deviations. As Stalin notes at his 13<sup>th</sup> Conference speech;

**"Trotsky affirms that groups arise because of the bureaucratic regime instituted by the Central Committee, and that if there were no bureaucratic regime, there would be no groups either. This is an un-Marxist approach, comrades. Groups arise, and will continue to arise, because we have in our country the most diverse forms of economy—from embryonic forms of socialism down to medievalism. That in the first place. Then we have the NEP, that is, we have allowed capitalism, the revival of private capital and the revival of the ideas that go with it, and these ideas are penetrating into the Party. That in the second place. And, in the third place, our Party is made up of three component parts: there are workers, peasants and intellectuals in its ranks. These then, if we approach the question in a Marxist way, are the causes why certain elements are drawn from the Party for the formation of groups, which in some cases we must remove by surgical action, and in others dissolve by ideological means, through discussion."** *Stalin, Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B)*

In almost all cases the outcry against bureaucracy by either left or right opportunists end up supporting and defending the bureaucracy in different form. Enver Hoxha, in his "Memoirs from my Meetings with Stalin" writes;

**"The enemies of communism, ranging from international bourgeois reaction down to the Khrushchevites and all the other revisionists, have striven with every means to**

blacken and distort all the virtues, pure thoughts and just actions of this great Marxist-Leninist, and to discredit the first socialist state set up by Lenin and Stalin. With great cunning the Khrushchevites, these new disciples of Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev and Tukhachevsky, **incited conceit and the feeling of superiority** in those who had taken part in the war. They **encouraged privileges for the élite, opened the way to bureaucracy** and 'liberalism' in the party and the state, **violated the true revolutionary norms**, and gradually managed to implant the defeatist spirit among the people." *Enver Hoxha, Memoirs from my Meetings with Stalin*

Marxist Leninists are not utopians to believe that bureaucracy will wither away overnight by force. They do take the necessary steps to fight against it and prepare the conditions for its withering away. One of the first which is , as Lenin puts it, bureaucrats "are reduced to the position of simple agents; **from a privileged group** holding "jobs" remunerated on a high, bourgeois scale, they become workers of a special "arm of the service", whose remuneration does **not exceed the ordinary pay of a competent worker.**"

One cannot and should not take the question of "bureaucracy" in the same manner, same context, within the same basket as they take in a capitalist country.

Karl Marx, 1843

### **From Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right**

What Hegel says about 'the Executive' does not merit the name of a philosophical development. Most of the paragraphs could be found verbatim in the Prussian Landrecht. Yet the administration proper is the most difficult point of the development.

Because Hegel has already claimed the police and the judiciary to be spheres of civil society, the executive is **nothing but the administration, which he develops as the bureaucracy.**

First of all, the 'Corporations', as the self-government of civil society, **presuppose the bureaucracy.** The sole determination arrived at is that the choice of the administrators and their officials, etc., is a mixed choice originating from the members of civil society and ratified by the proper authority (or as Hegel says, 'higher authority').

Over this sphere, for the maintenance of the state's universal interest and of legality, stand holders of the executive power, the executive civil servants and the advisory officials, which converge into the monarch.

A division of labour occurs in the business of the executive. Individuals must prove their capability for executive functions, i.e., they must sit for examinations. The choice of the determinate individual for civil service appointment is the prerogative of the royal authority. The distribution of these functions is given in the nature of the thing. **The official function is the duty and the life's work of the civil servants.** Accordingly, they must be paid by the state. The guarantee against malpractice by the bureaucracy is partly its hierarchy and answerability, and on the other hand the authority of the societies and Corporations; its

humaneness is a result partly of direct education in thought and ethical conduct and partly of the size of the state. The civil servants form the greater part of the middle class. The safeguard against it's becoming like an aristocracy and tyranny is partly the **sovereign at the top** and partly **Corporation-rights at the bottom**. The middle class is the class of education. Voila tout! Hegel gives us an empirical description of the bureaucracy, partly as it actually is, and partly according to the opinion which it has of itself. And with that the difficult chapter on 'the Executive' is brought to a close.

Hegel proceeds from the **separation of the state and civil society**, the separation of the particular interests and the absolutely universal; and indeed, **the bureaucracy is founded on this separation**. Hegel proceeds from the presupposition of the Corporations; and indeed, the bureaucracy presupposes the Corporations, in any event the 'corporation mind'. Hegel develops no content of the bureaucracy, but merely some general indications of its formal organisation; and indeed, **the bureaucracy is merely the formalism of a content which lies outside the bureaucracy itself**.

The **Corporations are the materialism of the bureaucracy**, and the bureaucracy is the spiritualism of the corporations. The **Corporation is the bureaucracy of civil society**, and **the bureaucracy is the Corporation of the state**. In actuality, the bureaucracy as civil society of the state is opposed to the state of civil society, the Corporations. Where the bureaucracy is to become a new principle, where the universal interest of the state begins to become explicitly a singular and thereby a real interest, it struggles against the Corporations as every consequence struggles against the existence of its premises. On the other hand, once the real life of the state awakens and civil society frees itself from the Corporations out of its inherent rational impulse, the

**bureaucracy seeks to restore them;** for as soon as the state of civil society falls so too does the civil society of the state. The spiritualism vanishes with its opposite materialism. The consequence struggles for the existence of its premises as soon as a new principle struggles not against the existence of the premises but against the principle of their existence. **The same mind that creates the Corporation in society creates the bureaucracy in the state.** Thus as soon as the corporation mind is attacked so too is the mind of the bureaucracy; and whereas the bureaucracy earlier fought the existence of the Corporations in order to create room for its own existence, now it seeks vigorously to sustain the existence of the Corporations in order to save the Corporation mind, which is its own mind.

**The bureaucracy is the state formalism of civil society.** It is the state's consciousness, **the state's will, the state's power, as a Corporation.** (The universal interest can behave vis-a-vis the particular only as a particular so long as the particular behaves vis-a-vis the universal as a universal. The bureaucracy must thus defend the imaginary universality of particular interest, i.e., the Corporation mind, in order to defend the imaginary particularity of the universal interests, i.e., its own mind. **The state must be Corporation so long as the Corporation wishes to be state.**) Being the state's consciousness, will, and power as a Corporation, the **bureaucracy is thus a particular, closed society within the state.** The bureaucracy wills the Corporation as an imaginary power. To be sure, the individual Corporation also has this will for its particular interest in opposition to the bureaucracy, but it wills the bureaucracy against the other Corporation, against the other particular interest. The bureaucracy as the completed Corporation therefore wins the day over the Corporation which is like incomplete bureaucracy. It reduces the Corporation to an appearance, or wishes to do so, but wishes this appearance to exist and to believe in its own existence. The Corporation is civil

society's attempt to become state; but the **bureaucracy is the state which has really made itself into civil society.**

The state formalism, which the bureaucracy is, is the state as formalism, and Hegel has described it precisely as such a formalism. Because this state formalism constitutes itself as a real power and becomes itself its own material content, it is evident that the **bureaucracy is a tissue of practical illusion, or the illusion of the state.** The bureaucratic mind is through and through a Jesuitical, theological mind. **The bureaucrats are the Jesuits and theologians of the state.** The bureaucracy is la république prêtre.

**Since the bureaucracy according to its essence is the state as formalism,** so too it is according to its end. The real end of the state thus **appears to the bureaucracy as an end opposed to the state.** The mind of the bureaucracy is the formal mind of the state. It therefore makes the formal mind of the state, or the real mindlessness of the state, **a categorical imperative.** The bureaucracy asserts itself to be the final end of the state. Because the bureaucracy makes its formal aims its content, it comes into conflict everywhere with the real aims. Hence it is obliged to present what is formal for the content and the content for what is formal. **The aims of the state are transformed into aims of bureaus, or the aims of bureaus into the aims of the state.** The bureaucracy is a circle from which no one can escape. Its **hierarchy is a hierarchy of knowledge.** The highest point entrusts the understanding of particulars to the lower echelons, whereas these, on the other hand, credit the highest with an understanding in regard to the universal; and thus, they deceive one another.

**The bureaucracy is the imaginary state alongside the real state;** it is the spiritualism of the state. As a result, everything has a double meaning, **one real and one bureaucratic,** just as

**knowledge is double, one real and one bureaucratic** (and the same with the will). A real thing, however, is treated according to **its bureaucratic essence**, according to its otherworldly, spiritual essence. The bureaucracy has the being of the state, the **spiritual being of society**, in its possession; it is its private property. The general spirit of the bureaucracy is the secret, the mystery, preserved inwardly by means of the hierarchy and **externally as a closed corporation**. To make public -the mind and the disposition of the state appears therefore to the bureaucracy as a betrayal of its mystery. Accordingly, **authority is the principle of its knowledge and being**, and the deification of authority is its mentality. But at the very heart of the bureaucracy this spiritualism turns into a crass materialism, the materialism of passive obedience, **of trust in authority**, the mechanism of an ossified and formalistic behaviour, **of fixed principles, conceptions, and traditions**. As far as the individual bureaucrat is concerned, **the end of the state becomes his private end**: a pursuit of higher posts, the building of a career. In the first place, he considers real life to be purely material, for the spirit of this life has its separate existence in the bureaucracy. Thus, **the bureaucrat must make life as materialistic as possible**. Secondly, real life is material for the bureaucrat, i.e. in so far as it becomes an object of bureaucratic action, because his spirit is prescribed for him, his end lies outside of him, **his existence is the existence of the bureau**. The state, then, exists only as various bureau-minds whose connection **consists of subordination and dumb obedience**. Real knowledge appears to be devoid of content just as real life appears to be dead, for this imaginary knowledge and life pass for what is real and essential. Thus, **the bureaucrat must use** the real state Jesuitically, no matter whether this Jesuitism be conscious or unconscious. But given that his antithesis is knowledge, it is inevitable that he likewise attains to self-consciousness and, at that moment,

deliberate Jesuitism. While the bureaucracy is on one hand this crass materialism, it manifests its crass spiritualism in its will to do everything, i.e., in its making the will the *causa prima*, for it is pure active existence which receives its content from without; thus it can manifest its existence only through forming and restricting this content. **The bureaucrat has the world as a mere object of his action.**

When Hegel calls the Executive power the objective aspect of the sovereignty residing in the crown, it is precisely in the same sense that the Catholic Church was the real existence of the sovereignty, content, and spirit of the Blessed Trinity. In the bureaucracy the identity of the state's interest and **the particular private aim** is established such that **the state's interest becomes a particular private aim** opposed to the other private aims.

The abolition [Aufhebung] of the bureaucracy **can consist only in the universal interest** becoming really - and not, as with Hegel, becoming purely in thought, in abstraction - **particular interest**; and this is **possible only through the particular interest really becoming universal**. Hegel starts from an unreal opposition and thereby brings it to a merely imaginary identity which, in fact, is itself all the more contradictory. Such an identity is the bureaucracy.

(...)

At this point Hegel cannot fail to see that he has constructed the executive as an antithesis to civil society, and indeed as a dominant extreme. How does he now establish a condition of Identity?

According to § 295 the security of the state and its subjects against the misuse [den Missbrauch] of power by ministers and their officials lies partly in their hierarchical organisation (as if the hierarchy itself were not the principal abuse [der

Hauptmissbrauch], and the matching personal sins of the civil servants were not it all to be compared with their inevitable hierarchical sins; the **hierarchy punishes** the civil servant to the extent that he sins against the hierarchy or commits a sin **in excess of the hierarchy**; but it takes him under **its protection** when the hierarchy sins through him; moreover the hierarchy is only with great difficulty **convinced of the sins of its member**) and in the authority given to societies and Corporations, because in itself this is a barrier against the intrusion of subjective caprice into the power entrusted to a civil servant, and it completes front below the state control (as if this control were not exercised with the outlook of the bureaucratic hierarchy) which does not reach down as far as the conduct of individuals.

Thus, the second guarantee against the caprice of the bureaucracy **lies in the privileges of the Corporations**.

Thus, if we ask Hegel what **civil society's protection against the bureaucracy is**, he answers:

1. The hierarchal organisation of the bureaucracy. Control. This, that the adversary is himself bound hand and foot, and if he is like a hammer vis-a-vis those below he is like all anvil in relation to those above. Now, where is the protection against the hierarchy? The lesser evil will surely be abolished through the greater inasmuch as it vanishes in comparison with it.

2. Conflict, the unresolved conflict between bureaucracy and Corporation. Struggle, the possibility of struggle, is the guarantee against being overcome. Later (§ 297) in addition to this Hegel adds as guarantee the 'institutions [of] the sovereign working ... at the top', by which is to be understood, once again, the hierarchy.

However, Hegel further adduces two moments (§ 296):

In the civil servant himself, something which is supposed to humanize him and make dispassionate, upright, and polite demeanor customary, **namely, direct education in thought and ethical conduct**, which is said to hold 'the mental counterpoise' to the mechanical character of his knowledge and actual work. As if the mechanical character of his **bureaucratic knowledge and his actual work** did not hold the 'counterpoise' to his education in thought and ethical conduct. And will not his actual mind and his actual work as substance triumph over the accident of his prior endowment? His office is indeed his substantial situation and his bread and butter. Fine, except that Hegel sets direct education in thought and ethical conduct against the mechanism of bureaucratic knowledge and work! The man within the civil servant is supposed to secure the civil servant against himself. What a unity! Mental counterpoise. What a dualistic category!

Hegel further adduces the size of the state, which in Russia certainly doesn't guarantee against the caprice of the **executive civil servants**, and in any case is a circumstance which lies outside the 'essence' of the bureaucracy.

Hegel has developed the 'Executive' as bureaucratic officialdom [Staatsbediententum].

Here in the sphere of the 'absolutely universal interest of the state proper' we find nothing but unresolved conflict. The civil servants' examination and livelihood constitute the final synthesis.

Hegel adduces the impotency of the bureaucracy, its conflict with the Corporation, as its final consecration.

In § 297 an identity is established in so far as 'civil servants and the members of the executive constitute the greater part of the middle class'. Hegel praises this 'middle class' as the pillar of the

state so far as honesty and intelligence are concerned (in the Addition to this paragraph).

It is a **prime concern of the state** that a middle class should be developed, but this can be done only **if the state is an organic unity** like the one described here, i.e., it can be done only by giving authority to spheres of particular interests, which are relatively independent, and by appointing an army of officials whose personal arbitrariness is broken against such authorized bodies.

To be sure the people can appear as one class, the middle class, **only in such an organic unity**; but is something that keeps itself going by means of the counterbalancing of privileges an organic unity? The executive power is the one most difficult to develop; it, much more than the legislature, belongs to the entire people.

Later (in the Remark to § 308) Hegel expresses the proper spirit of the bureaucracy when he characterises it as 'business routine' and the 'horizon of a restricted sphere'.

Karl Marx

Marx in Neue Rheinische Zeitung January 1849

### **The Neue Rheinische Zeitung Montesquieu LVI**

Neue Rheinische Zeitung No. 202

Cologne, January 21. With the sly petty cunning of an experienced horse-dealer, Montesquieu LVI seeks to sell the "gift horse", the imposed constitution, to the primary voters. He is the Montesquieu of the horse-fair.

Anyone not wanting the imposed constitution wants a republic, and not just a republic, but a red republic! Unfortunately, the issue in our elections is least of all a republic, or a red republic; it is simply this:

Do you want the **old absolutism** together with a refurbished system of social estates, or do you want a **bourgeois system of representation**? Do you want a political constitution in keeping with the "existing social relations" of past centuries, or do you want a political constitution in keeping with the "existing social relations" of your century?

In this case, therefore, it is least of all a matter of fighting against bourgeois property relations similar to the struggle that is taking place in France and is in the offing in England; **rather it is a question of a struggle against** a political constitution which endangers "bourgeois property relations" by surrendering the helm of state to the representatives of "feudal property relations", to the King by the grace of God, the army, the bureaucracy, the country squires, and a few financial magnates and philistines who are allied with them.

Beyond a doubt, the imposed constitution has solved the social question in keeping with the views of these gentlemen.

What is the "social question" as understood **by the civil servant**? It is the maintenance of his salary and his present position, **which is superior to the people.**

What is the "social question" as understood **by the nobility** and its big landowners? It is the maintenance of the hitherto existing feudal rights of the landowners, seizure of the most lucrative posts in the army and civil service by the families of the landed nobility, and finally direct alms from the public purse. Apart from these palpable material and therefore "most sacred" interests of the gentlemen "with God for King and Country", it is for them, of course, also a question of **preserving those social privileges** which distinguish their species from the inferior species of the bourgeois, peasants and plebeians. The old National Assembly was dispersed because it dared to touch these most sacred interests". As we have already indicated, these gentlemen, by "revision" of the imposed constitution, understand simply the introduction of a system of social estates, that is to say, a form of political constitution representing the "social" interests of the feudal aristocracy, the bureaucracy and the monarchy by the grace of God.

We repeat, there is not the slightest doubt that the imposed constitution solves the "social question" **according to the ideas of the aristocracy and bureaucracy**, in other words, it presents these gentlemen with a form of government which ensures the **exploitation of the people by these demigods.**

But has the imposed constitution solved the "social question" from the standpoint of the bourgeoisie? In other words, does the bourgeoisie receive a political form enabling it freely to run matters concerning its class as a whole, i.e., the interests of commerce, industry and agriculture, to make the most productive use of public funds, to manage the state apparatus as cheaply as possible, to protect national labor effectively abroad,

and within the country to open up all springs of national wealth silted by feudal mud?

Does history provide a single example showing that under a king imposed by the grace of God, the bourgeoisie ever succeeded in attaining a form of government in keeping with its material interests?

In order to establish a constitutional monarchy, it was twice compelled to get rid of the Stuarts in Britain, and the hereditary Bourbons in France and to expel William of Orange from Belgium.

What is the reason?

A hereditary king by the grace of God is not a particular individual **but** the physical representative of the old society within the new society. Political power in the hands of a king by the grace of God is political power in the hands of the old society existing now merely as a ruin; it is political power in the hands of the feudal estates, whose interests are profoundly antagonistic to those of the bourgeoisie.

But it is the "King by the grace of God" who forms the basis of the imposed constitution.

Just as the feudal strata of society regard the monarchy by divine right as their political apex, so does the monarchy by divine right regard the feudal estates as its social foundation, the well-known "monarchical wall".

Therefore, whenever the interests of the feudal lords and of the army and **bureaucracy controlled by them** clash with the interests of the bourgeoisie, the monarchy by divine right will invariably be impelled to a coup d'etat and a revolutionary or counter-revolutionary crisis will arise.

Why was the National Assembly ejected? Only because it upheld the interests of the bourgeoisie as against the interests of feudalism; because it wanted to abolish feudal relations, which impede agriculture, **to subordinate the army and bureaucracy to trade and industry**, to stop the squandering of public funds and abolish aristocratic and bureaucratic titles.

All these matters chiefly and directly affected the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Thus, coup d'etats and counter-revolutionary crises are vital to the existence of the monarchy by the grace of God, which the March and similar events compelled to eat humble pie and reluctantly to accept a pseudo-bourgeois monarchy.

Can credit ever revive again under a form of government whose inevitable climax are coup d'etats, counter-revolutionary crises and states of siege?

What a delusion!

Bourgeois industry must burst the chains of absolutism and feudalism. **A revolution against both only demonstrates that bourgeois industry has reached a level when it must either secure an appropriate political form or perish.**

The system of bureaucratic tutelage consolidated by the imposed constitution **spells death for industry**. It is sufficient to look at the Prussian administration of mines, the factory regulations, etc. When an English manufacturer compares his costs of production with those of a Prussian manufacturer, he will always first of all note the time losses which the Prussian manufacturer incurs **because he has to observe bureaucratic rules.**

What sugar-refiner does not remember the Prussian trade agreement with the Netherlands in 1839? What Prussian factory

owner does not blush at the memory of 1846, when the Prussian government in deference to the Austrian government banned exports to Galicia for a whole province, and when one bankruptcy after another occurred in Breslau the Prussian government declared with astonishment that it had had no idea that so important an export trade was carried with Galicia, etc.!

Men of the same type are placed at the helm of state by the imposed constitution, and this "gift" itself comes from the same men. Consequently, examine it twice.

The Galicia adventure draws our attention to another point.

At that time the counter-revolutionary Prussian government in league with Austria and Russia sacrificed Silesian industry and Silesian trade. This maneuver will be constantly repeated. The banker of the Prussian-Austrian-Russian counter-revolution, from which the monarchy by the grace of God with its monarchical walls will always have to seek outside support, is England. The same England is German industry's most dangerous opponent. These two facts, we believe, speak for themselves.

At home, **an industry fettered by bureaucracy** and an agriculture fettered by feudal privileges; abroad, a trade sold by the counter-revolution to England -- such is the fate of Prussia's national wealth under the aegis of the imposed constitution.

The report of the "Financial Commission" of the dispersed National Assembly has thrown sufficient light on the divine management of national wealth.

The report however mentions only by way of example the sums taken from the treasury to support the tottering monarchical walls and gild foreign pretenders to the absolute monarchy (Don Carlos). But this money, purloined from the pockets of the rest of

the citizens to enable the aristocracy to live in appropriate style and to keep the "pillars" of the feudal monarchy well buttressed, is only of secondary importance compared with the state budget imposed simultaneously with Manteuffel's constitution. The main features of the imposed state budget are, first of all, **a strong army to enable the minority to rule the majority**; as large an army as possible of officials so that as many of them as possible, by virtue of their private interests, are alienated from the common interest; unproductive employment of public funds in order that wealth, as the *Neue Preussische Zeitung* says, should not make the subjects presumptuous; immobilization wherever possible of public funds instead of employing them in industry in order that at predictable moments of crisis the government by divine right independently confront the people. The basic principle of the imposed Prussian constitution is **to use the taxes for maintaining** the state as an oppressive, independent and sacred force contraposed to industry, commerce and agriculture, instead of degrading it by turning it into a profane tool of bourgeois society.

The gift is worthy of the donor. The constitution is of a piece with the present Prussian government that presented it. To get an idea of this government's hostility towards the bourgeoisie it is sufficient to point to its proposed trade regulations. On the pretext of advancing towards association the government attempts to return to the guild system. Competition compels the manufacturer to produce as cheaply as possible and therefore on a constantly increasing scale, i.e., with more capital, with a continuously expanding division of labor and constantly increasing use of machinery. **Every new division of labor depreciates the traditional skill of the craftsmen**, every new machine ousts hundreds of workers, production on a larger scale, that is, with more capital, ruins small trade and petty-bourgeois enterprise. The government promises to protect the handicrafts

against the factories, acquired skills against division of labor, and small capital against big capital, **by means of feudal guild practices**. Thus, the German nation, particularly the Prussian, which is barely able to withstand English competition, is to become its defenseless prey, forced to accept a form of trade organization that is incompatible with modern means of production and is already burst wide open by modern industry.

**We are certainly the last people** to desire the rule of the bourgeoisie. We were the first in Germany to raise our voice against the bourgeoisie when today's "men of action" were spending their time complacently in petty squabbles.

But **we say** to the workers and the petty bourgeois: **it is better** to suffer in the contemporary bourgeois society, **whose industry creates the means for the foundation of a new society** that will liberate you all, than **to revert to a bygone society**, which, on the pretext of saving your classes, **thrusts the entire nation back into medieval barbarism**.

But medieval estates and conditions are, as we have seen, the social foundation of the government **by the grace of God**. This government is unsuitable for modern bourgeois society. It necessarily tries to create a society in its own image. It is entirely consistent, when it attempts to replace free competition by the guild system, mechanical spinning by the spinning-wheel and the steam plough by the hoe.

Why is it then that, under these circumstances, the Prussian bourgeoisie, in contrast to its French, English and Belgian predecessors, proclaims as its shibboleth the imposed constitution (and with it the monarchy by divine right, the bureaucracy and the landowning nobility)?

The commercial and industrial sections of the bourgeoisie throw themselves into the arms of the counter- revolution **for fear of**

**the revolution.** As though counter-revolution were not the overture to revolution.

There is moreover a section of the bourgeoisie that, quite indifferent to the interests of its class as a whole, **pursues its own particular interests**, which may even be inimical to those of its class.

These are financial magnates, big creditors of the state, bankers, and rentiers, **whose wealth increases proportionately to the poverty of the people**, and finally men whose business depends on the old political structure, e.g., Dumont and his literary lumpen proletariat. **These are also ambitious professors, lawyers and similar persons**, who can only hope **to obtain respectable posts in a state** where **betrayal of the people's interests** to the government is a lucrative business.

These are certain manufacturers who do well out of their transactions with the government; contractors whose considerable profits depend on the general exploitation of the people; philistines who would lose their importance if political life were conducted on a larger scale; local councilors who under cover of the old institutions arrange their private shady affairs at the expense of the public; oil-merchants who at the price of their betrayal of the revolution have become Excellencies and Knights of the Eagle; bankrupt cloth-merchants and speculators in railway-shares who have become royal bank directors, etc., etc.

"It is they who are the advocates of the imposed constitution." If the bourgeoisie has a sympathetic heart for these poor brothers and if it wants to be worthy of the respect of Montesquieu LVI, then it should elect delegates in keeping with the imposed constitution.

Frederick Engels

## Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany

VII.

The Frankfort National Assembly.

FEBRUARY 27, 1852.

It will perhaps be in the recollection of our readers that in the six preceding papers we followed up the revolutionary movement of Germany to the two great popular victories of March 13th in Vienna, and March 18th in Berlin. We saw, both in Austria and Prussia, the establishment of constitutional governments and the proclamation, as leading rules for all future policy, of Liberal, or middle class principles; and the only difference observable between the two great centers of action was this, that in Prussia the liberal bourgeoisie, in the persons of two wealthy merchants, Messrs. Camphausen and Hansemann, directly seized upon the reins of power; while in Austria, where the bourgeoisie was, politically, far less educated, the **Liberal bureaucracy walked into office, and professed to hold power in trust for them.** We have further seen, how the parties and classes of society, that were heretofore all united in opposition to the old government, got divided among themselves after the victory, or even during the struggle; and how that same Liberal bourgeoisie that alone profited from the victory turned round immediately upon its allies of yesterday, assumed a hostile attitude **against every class or party of a more advanced character,** and concluded an **alliance with the conquered feudal and bureaucratic interests.** It was in fact, evident, even from the beginning of the revolutionary drama, that the Liberal bourgeoisie could not hold its ground against the vanquished, but not destroyed, feudal and bureaucratic parties except by relying upon the assistance of the popular and more advanced parties; and that it equally required,

against the torrent of these more advanced masses, the assistance of the feudal nobility and of the bureaucracy. Thus, it was clear enough that the bourgeoisie in Austria and Prussia did not possess sufficient strength to maintain their power, and to adapt the institutions of the country to their own wants and ideas. The Liberal bourgeois ministry was only a halting-place from which, according to the turn circumstances might take, the country would **either** have to go on to the more advanced stage of Unitarian republicanism, or to **relapse into the old clerico-feudal and bureaucratic regime**. At all events, the real, decisive struggle was yet to come; the events of March had only engaged the combat.

Karl Marx 1852

**From The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte.**

...under the absolute monarchy, during the first Revolution, and under Napoleon **the bureaucracy was only the means of preparing the class rule of the bourgeoisie.** Under the Restoration, under Louis Philippe, under the parliamentary republic, **it was the instrument of the ruling class,** however much it strove for power of its own.

Only under the second Bonaparte does the state seem to have made itself completely independent. The state machinery has so strengthened itself vis-à-vis civil society that the Chief of the Society of December 10 suffices for its head – an adventurer dropped in from abroad, raised on the shoulders of a drunken soldiery which he bought with whisky and sausages and to which he has to keep throwing more sausages. Hence the low-spirited despair, the feeling of monstrous humiliation and degradation that oppresses the breast of France and makes her gasp. She feels dishonored.

(...)

**Taxes are the life source of the bureaucracy, the army, the priests, and the court – in short, of the entire apparatus of the executive power.** Strong government and heavy taxes are identical. By its very nature, small-holding property forms a basis for an all-powerful and numberless bureaucracy. It **creates a uniform level of personal and economic relationships over the whole extent of the country.** Hence it also permits uniform action from a supreme center on all points of this uniform mass. It destroys the aristocratic intermediate steps between the mass of the people and the power of the state. On all sides, therefore, **it calls forth the direct intrusion of this state power and the interposition of its immediate organs.** Finally, it produces an

unemployed surplus population which can find no place either on the land or in the towns and which perforce reaches out for state offices as a sort of respectable alms and provokes the creation of additional state positions. By the new markets which he opened with bayonets, and by the plundering of the Continent, Napoleon repaid the compulsory taxes with interest. These taxes were a spur to the industry of the peasant, whereas now they rob his industry of its last resources and complete his defenselessness against pauperism. **An enormous bureaucracy, well gallooned and well fed, is the "Napoleonic idea" which is most congenial to the second Bonaparte.** How could it be otherwise, **considering that alongside the actual classes of society,** he is forced to create an **artificial caste** for which the maintenance of his regime becomes a bread-and-butter question? Hence one of his first financial operations was the raising of officials' salaries to their old level and the creation of new sinecures.

Karl Marx in The Neue-Oder Zeitung 1855

### **News from Australia**

Here we see, in essence, motives similar to those which led to the Declaration of Independence of the United States, except that in Australia the conflict is initiated by the workers **against the monopolists linked with the colonial bureaucracy.**

Karl Marx: The Civil War in France

### **The Third Address**

May 1871

[The Paris Commune]

...the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes.

The **centralized state power**, with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy, and judicature – organs wrought after the plan of a systematic and hierarchic division of labor – **originates from the days of absolute monarchy**, serving nascent middle class society as a mighty weapon in its struggle against feudalism. Still, its development remained clogged by all manner of medieval rubbish, seignorial rights, local privileges, municipal and guild monopolies, and provincial constitutions. The gigantic broom of the French Revolution of the 18th century swept away all these relics of bygone times, thus clearing simultaneously the social soil of its last hinderances to the superstructure of the modern state edifice raised under the First Empire, itself the offspring of the coalition wars of old semi-feudal Europe against modern France.

Engels

February 12, 1865

### **From The Prussian Military Question and the German Workers' Party**

The Prussian bourgeoisie, which, as the most advanced section of the whole German bourgeoisie, has a right here to be taken as representative of that whole class, is setting a term to its political existence, thanks to a lack of courage which is without parallel in the history even of that pusillanimous class and which is only excused to some extent by contemporary international events. In March and April 1848 it had the whip-hand; but hardly did the first independent stirrings of the **working class begin when the bourgeoisie at once** took fright and hastily retreated to shelter behind the self-same bureaucracy and the self-same feudal aristocracy which it had but a moment before conquered with the aid of the workers. The Manteuffel era was the inevitable consequence. At last came the "New Era" — which the bourgeois opposition had done nothing to bring about. This unexpected piece of good fortune turned the heads of the bourgeoisie. It quite forgot the position it had created for itself by its repeated revisions of the constitution, **its subordination to the bureaucracy and the feudal aristocracy** (even to the extent of restoring the feudal Provincial and District Estates ) and its constant retreats from one position to the next. It now believed it had the whip-hand again, and quite forgot that it had itself restored all the powers hostile to it, which, subsequently reinvigorated, held the real power in the state in their possession, just as before 1848. Then the reorganisation of the army went off in its midst like a bombshell.

There **are only two ways** in which the bourgeoisie can gain political power for itself. Since it is an army of officers without

any soldiers and can only acquire these soldiers from the ranks of the workers, it must **either ensure that the workers are its allies**, or it must buy political power piecemeal from the powers opposing it from above, in particular from the monarchy. The history of the English and French bourgeoisie shows that **there is no other way**.

But the Prussian bourgeoisie had lost all its enthusiasm — and what is more quite without reason — for forming a sincere alliance with the workers. In 1848 the German workers' party, then still at a rudimentary stage of development and organisation, was prepared to do the bourgeoisie's work for it at a very modest price, but the latter was more afraid of the slightest independent stirring of the proletariat than it was of the feudal aristocracy and the bureaucracy. Peace bought at the price of **servitude appeared more desirable to** it than even the mere prospect of a freedom-struggle. From that time on, this holy fear of the workers had become a habit with the bourgeoisie, until finally Herr Schulze-Delitzsch began his savings-box campaign. The purpose of this was to show the workers that there could be **no greater happiness for them than to be exploited industrially by the bourgeoisie for the rest of their lives**, and even for generations to come, and indeed, that they should themselves contribute to this exploitation by themselves supplementing their income through all manner of industrial associations, thereby enabling the capitalists to reduce their wages. But although no doubt **the industrial bourgeoisie is the most uneducated of the classes** that constitute the German nation, apart from the junior cavalry officers, such a campaign had from the outset no prospect of lasting success with such an intellectually advanced people as the Germans. The more intelligent of the bourgeoisie themselves could not fail to perceive that nothing could come of this, and the alliance with the workers collapsed once more.

Which left bargaining with the government for political power, to be paid for in cash — **from the pockets of the people**, naturally. The bourgeoisie's real power in the state consisted only in the right to approve taxation, and even that was much hedged about with ifs and buts. This, then, is where the lever needed to be applied, and a class so skilled in bargaining could surely not fail to be at an advantage here.

But no. The bourgeois opposition in Prussia — in complete contrast especially to the classical bourgeoisie of England in the 17th and 18th centuries — saw the situation like this: they would bargain for power without paying any money for it.

(..)

The liberal and progressist bourgeoisie ought consequently to have subjected the reorganisation of the army and the necessarily concomitant increase in peace-time strength to a cool and objective examination, in which case they would probably have come to approximately the same conclusions as we ourselves. In so doing they should not have forgotten that after all they could not prevent the provisional introduction of the new system and could only delay its eventual consolidation, as long as the plan contained so many correct and useful elements. Above all therefore they ought to have taken good care not to adopt from the outset a' directly hostile attitude to reorganisation; they ought on the contrary to have used this reorganisation and the finance that needed to be approved for it to obtain for themselves as much reimbursement from the "New Era" as possible, to convert the 9 or 10 million in new taxation into as much political power for themselves as possible.

And there were certainly enough things to be done in that regard! There was all Manteuffel's legislation concerning the press and the right of association; **there were all the powers accorded to**

**the police and bureaucracy which had been taken over unchanged** from the absolute monarchy; the emasculation of the courts by disputing their competence; the Provincial and District Estates; above all, the way in which the constitution was interpreted under Manteuffel, which needed to be countered by a new constitutional practice; the attrition of local self-government in the towns by the bureaucracy; and a hundred and one other things for which any other bourgeoisie in the same situation would gladly have paid a tax-increase of 1/2 Taler per head of population and all of which they could have obtained if they had proceeded with a modicum of skill. But the bourgeois opposition thought otherwise. As far as freedom of the press, association and assembly were concerned Manteuffel's laws had hit upon precisely that **degree of freedom under which the bourgeoisie felt comfortable**. It could demonstrate gently against the government without let or hindrance; any increase in freedom would have brought less advantage to it than to the workers, and rather than give the workers freedom for an independent movement, the **bourgeoisie preferred to submit to a little more coercion** on the part of the government. Precisely the **same thing applied to the limitation of the powers enjoyed by the police and bureaucracy**. The bourgeoisie believed that with the "New Era" ministry it had already got the better of the bureaucracy, and it approved of this bureaucracy keeping a free hand to deal with the workers. It quite forgot that **the bureaucracy was far stronger and more vigorous than any ministry** that might be well disposed towards the bourgeoisie. And then it imagined that with the fall of Manteuffel the millennium had arrived for the bourgeoisie and that all that was left to do was to reap the ripe harvest of bourgeois hegemony, without paying a penny for it.

Marx and Engels

German Ideology

**From; "Stirner" Delighted in His Construction**

As regards the middle class, we can only emphasise here a few significant factors. It is significant that linen manufacture, i.e., an industry based on the spinning wheel and the hand-loom, came to be of some importance in Germany at the very time when in England those cumbersome tools were already being ousted by machines. Most characteristic of all is the position of the German middle class in relation to Holland. Holland, the only part of the Hanseatic League that became commercially important, tore itself free, cut Germany off from world trade except for two ports (Hamburg and Bremen) and since then dominated the whole of German trade. The **German middle class was too impotent to set limits to exploitation** by the Dutch. The bourgeoisie of little Holland, with its well-developed class interests, was more powerful than the far more numerous German middle class with its indifference and its **divided petty interests**. The fragmentation of interests was matched by the fragmentation of political organisation, the division into small principalities and free imperial cities. How could political concentration arise in a country which lacked all the economic conditions for it?

The impotence of each separate sphere of life (one can speak here neither of estates nor of classes, but at most of former estates and classes not yet born) **did not allow any one of them to gain exclusive domination**. The inevitable consequence was that during the epoch of absolute monarchy, which assumed here its most stunted, semi-patriarchal form, the special sphere which, owing to **division of labour, was responsible for the administration of public interests** acquired an abnormal **independence**, which became still greater in the bureaucracy of

modern times. Thus, the state built itself up into an apparently independent force, and this position, which in other countries **was only transitory** — a transition stage — it has maintained in Germany **until the present day**. This position of the state explains both the **conscientiousness of the civil servant**, which is found nowhere else, and all the illusions about the state which are current in Germany, as well as the apparent independence of German theoreticians in relation to the middle class — the seeming contradiction between the form in which these theoreticians express the interests of the middle class and these interests themselves.

The characteristic form which French liberalism, based on real class interests, assumed in Germany we find again in Kant. Neither he, nor the German middle class, whose whitewashing spokesman he was, noticed that **these theoretical ideas of the bourgeoisie had as their basis material interests and a will that was conditioned and determined by the material relations of production**. Kant, therefore, separated this theoretical expression from the interests which it expressed; he made the materially motivated determinations of the will of the French bourgeois into pure self-determinations of “free will”, of the will in and for itself, of the human will, and so converted it into purely ideological conceptual determinations and moral postulates. Hence the German petty bourgeois recoiled in horror from the practice of this energetic bourgeois liberalism as soon as this practice showed itself, both in the Reign of Terror and in shameless bourgeois profit-making.

Frederick Engels

The Housing Question

**From, How the Bourgeoisie Solves the Housing Question**

The bureaucracy is beginning more and more **to despise embezzlement as the sole means of improving its income**; it is turning its back on the state and beginning to hunt after the far more lucrative posts **on the administration of industrial enterprises**. Those who still remain in office follow the example of their superiors and speculate in shares, or “participate” in railways, etc. One is even justified in assuming that the lieutenants also have their hands in certain speculations. In short, **the decomposition of all the elements of the old state** and the transition from the absolute monarchy is in full swing, and with the next big trade and industrial crisis not only will the present swindle collapse, but the old Prussian state as well.

Lenin

**From, The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats**

Collected Works, Volume 2, pages 323-352.

“if the working class stands out as the vanguard fighter for democratic institutions, this will strength the democratic movement, will strengthen the struggle for political liberty, because the working class will spur on all the other democratic and political opposition elements, will push the liberals towards the political radicals, will push the radicals towards an irrevocable rupture with the whole of the political and social structure of present society. We said above that all socialists in Russia should become Social-Democrats. We now add: all true and consistent democrats in Russia should become Social-Democrats.

We will illustrate what we mean by quoting the following example. Take **the civil service, the bureaucracy**, as representing a special category of persons who specialise in the work of administration and **occupy a privileged position as compared with the people**. We see this institution everywhere, from autocratic and semi-Asiatic Russia to cultured. free and civilised England, as an essential organ of bourgeois society. The complete lack of rights of the people in relation to government officials and **the complete absence of control over the privileged bureaucracy** correspond to the backwardness of Russia and to its absolutism In England powerful popular control is exercised over the administration, but even there that control is far from being complete, even there the bureaucracy retains not a few of its privileges, and not infrequently is the master and not the servant of the people. Even in England we see that powerful social groups support the privileged position of the bureaucracy and hinder the complete democratisation of that institution.

Why? Because it is in the interests of the proletariat alone to democratise it completely ; the most progressive strata of the bourgeoisie defend certain prerogatives of the bureaucracy and are opposed to the election of all officials, opposed to the complete abolition of electoral qualifications, opposed to making officials directly responsible to the people, etc., because **these strata realise that the proletariat will take advantage of such complete democratisation in order to use it against the bourgeoisie.** This is the case in Russia, too. Many and most diverse strata of the Russian people are opposed to the omnipotent, irresponsible, corrupt, savage, ignorant and parasitic Russian bureaucracy. But except for the proletariat, not one of these strata would agree to the complete democratisation of the bureaucracy, because all these strata (bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, the “intelligentsia” in general) have some ties with the bureaucracy, because all these strata are kith and kin of the Russian bureaucracy. Who does not know how easy it is in Holy Russia for a radical intellectual, or socialist intellectual, to turn into an official of The Imperial Government, an official who takes comfort from the thought that he does “good” within the limits of office routine, an official who pleads this “good” in justification of his political indifference, his servility towards the government of the knout and the whip? The proletariat alone is unreservedly hostile to the autocracy and the Russian bureaucracy, the **proletariat alone has no ties with these organs of aristocratic bourgeois society** and the proletariat alone is capable of irreconcilable hostility towards them and of waging a determined struggle against them.

Lenin

## **From; One Step Forward, Two Steps Back**

1904

(THE CRISIS IN OUR PARTY)

Opportunism In Questions Of Organisation

.....Perhaps **the only attempt to analyse the concept bureaucracy** is the distinction drawn in the new Iskra (No. 53) between the **“formal democratic principle”** (author’s italics) and the **“formal bureaucratic principle”**. This distinction (which, unfortunately, was no more developed or explained than the reference to the non-Iskraists) **contains a grain of truth**. Bureaucracy versus democracy is in fact **centralism versus autonomism**; it is the organisational principle of revolutionary Social-Democracy as opposed to the organisational principle of opportunist Social-Democracy. The latter **strives to proceed from the bottom upward**, and, therefore, wherever possible and as far as possible, upholds autonomism and “democracy”, carried (by the overzealous) **to the point of anarchism**. The former strives to proceed from the top downward and upholds an extension of the rights and powers of the centre in relation to the parts. In the period of disunity and separate circles, this top from which revolutionary Social-Democracy strove to proceed organisationally **was inevitably one of the circles**, the one enjoying most influence by virtue of its activity and its revolutionary consistency (in our case, the Iskra organisation). In the period of the restoration of actual Party unity and dissolution of the obsolete circles in this unity, this top is inevitably the Party Congress, as the supreme organ of the Party; the Congress as far as possible includes representatives of all the active organisations, and, by appointing the central institutions (often with a membership which satisfies the advanced elements of the

Party more than the backward and is more to the taste of its revolutionary than its opportunist wing), makes them the top until the next Congress. Such, at any rate, is the case among the Social-Democratic Europeans, although little by little this custom, **so abhorrent in principle to anarchists**, is beginning to spread—not without difficulty and not without conflicts and squabbles—to the Social-Democratic Asiatics.

Opportunism in programme is naturally connected with **opportunism in tactics and opportunism in organisation**. The exposition of the “new” point of view was undertaken by Comrade Wolfgang Heine. To give the reader some idea of the political complexion of this typical intellectual, who on joining the Social-Democratic movement brought with him opportunist habits of thought, it is enough to say that Comrade Wolfgang Heine is something less than a German Comrade Akimov and something more than a German Comrade Egorov.

Comrade Wolfgang Heine took the field in the Sozialistische Monatshefte with no less pomp than Comrade Axelrod in the new Iskra. The very title of his article is priceless: “Democratic Observations on the Göhre Incident” (Sozialistische Monatshefte, No. 4, April). The contents are no less thunderous. Comrade W. Heine rises up in arms against “encroachments on the autonomy of the constituency”, champions “the democratic principle”, and protests against **the interference of an “appointed authority”** (i.e., the Central Party Executive) in the **free election of deputies by the people**. The point at issue, Comrade W. Heine admonishes us, is not a random incident, but a general “tendency towards bureaucracy and centralism in the Party”, a tendency, he says, which was to be observed before, but which is now becoming particularly dangerous. It must be “recognised as a principle that the local institutions of the Party are the vehicles of Party life” (**a plagiarism** on Comrade Martov’s

pamphlet *Once More in the Minority*). We must not “accustom ourselves to having all important political decisions come from one centre” and must warn the Party against “a doctrinaire policy which loses contact with life” (**borrowed from** Comrade Martov’s speech at the Party Congress to the effect that “life will assert itself”). Rendering his argument more profound, Comrade W. Heine says: “. . . If we go down to the roots of the matter and leave aside personal conflicts, which here, as everywhere, have played no small part, this bitterness against the revisionists [the italics are the author’s and evidently hint at a distinction between fighting revisionism and fighting revisionists] will be found to be mainly expressive of the distrust of the Party officialdom for ‘outsiders’ [W. Heine had apparently not yet read the pamphlet about combating the state of siege, and therefore resorted to an Anglicism—*Outsidertum* ], the distrust of tradition for the unusual, of the impersonal institution for everything individual [see Axelrod’s resolution at the League Congress on the suppression of individual initiative]—in short, of that tendency which we have defined above as a tendency towards bureaucracy and centralism in the Party.”

**The idea of “discipline”** inspires Comrade W. Heine with a **no less noble disgust** than Comrade Axelrod.... “The revisionists,” he writes, “have been accused of lack of discipline for having written for the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, an organ whose Social-Democratic character has even been denied because it is not controlled by the Party. This very attempt to narrow down the concept ‘Social-Democratic’, this insistence on discipline in the sphere of ideological production, where **absolute freedom should prevail** [remember: the ideological struggle is a process whereas the forms of organisation are only forms], demonstrates the tendency towards bureaucracy and the suppression of individuality.” And W. Heine goes on and on, fulminating against this detestable tendency to create “one big all-embracing

organisation, as centralised as possible, one set of tactics, and one theory", against the demand for "implicit obedience", "blind submission", against "oversimplified centralism", etc., etc., literally "à la Axelrod".

**It is not surprising** that Kautsky arrives at the following conclusion: "There is perhaps no other question on which revisionism in all countries, despite its multiplicity of form and hue, is so alike as on the question of organisation." Kautsky, too, defines the basic tendencies of orthodoxy and revisionism in this sphere with the help of the "dreadful word": bureaucracy versus democracy. We are told, he says, that to give the Party leadership the right to influence the selection of candidates (for parliament) by the constituencies is "a shameful encroachment on the democratic principle, which demands that all political activity proceed from the bottom upward, by the independent activity of the masses, and not from the top downward, in a bureaucratic way.... But if there is any democratic principle, it is that the majority must have predominance over the minority, and not the other way round...." The election of a member of parliament by any constituency is an important matter for the Party as a whole, which should influence the nomination of candidates, if only through its representatives (Vertrauensmänner ). "Whoever considers this too bureaucratic or centralistic let him suggest that candidates be nominated by the direct vote of the Party membership at large [sämmtliche Parteigenossen ]. If he thinks this is not practicable, he must not complain of a lack of democracy when this function, like many others that concern the Party as a whole, is exercised by one or several Party bodies." It has long been "common law" in the German Party for constituencies to "come to a friendly understanding" with the Party leadership about the choice of candidates. "But the Party has grown too big for this tacit common law to suffice any longer. Common law ceases to be law when it ceases to be accepted as a matter of

course, when its stipulations, and even its very existence, are called in question. Then it becomes necessary to formulate the law specifically, to codify it" . . . to go over to more "precise statutory definition and, accordingly, greater strictness [grössere Straffheit ] of organisation".

Thus you have, in a different environment, the same struggle between the opportunist and the revolutionary wing of the Party on the question of organisation, **the same conflict between autonomism and centralism, between democracy and "bureaucracy"**, between the tendency to relax and the tendency to tighten organisation and discipline, **between the mentality of the unstable intellectual** and that of the staunch proletarian, between intellectualist individualism and proletarian solidarity. What, one asks, was the attitude to this conflict of bourgeois democracy—not the bourgeois democracy which prankish history has only promised in private to show to Comrade Axelrod someday, but the real and actual bourgeois democracy which in Germany has spokesmen no less shrewd and observant than our own gentlemen of Osvobozhdeniye? German bourgeois democracy at once reacted to the new controversy, and—like Russian bourgeois democracy, like bourgeois democracy everywhere and always—sided solidly with the opportunist wing of the Social-Democratic Party. The Frankfurter Zeitung, leading organ of the German stock exchange, published a thunderous editorial (Frankfurter Zeitung, April 7, 1904, No. 97, evening edition) which shows that **shameless plagiarizing of Axelrod is becoming a veritable disease** with the German press. The stern democrats of the Frankfurt stock exchange lash out furiously at the "absolutism" in the Social-Democratic Party, at the "party dictatorship", at the "autocratic rule of the Party authorities", at the "interdicts" which are intended "concurrently to chastise revisionism as a whole" (recall the "false accusation of opportunism"), at the insistence on "blind

obedience", "deadening discipline", "servile subordination", and the transforming of Party members into "political corpses" (that is a good bit stronger than cogs and wheels!). "All distinctiveness of personality", the knights of the stock exchange indignantly exclaim at the sight of the undemocratic regime among the Social-Democrats, "all individuality is to be held in opprobrium, because it is feared that they might lead to the French order of things, to Jaurèsism and Millerandism, as was stated in so many words by Sindermann, who made the report on the subject" at the Party Congress of the Saxon Social-Democrats.

... **When we speak of fighting opportunism**, we must never forget a characteristic feature of present-day opportunism in every sphere, namely, its vagueness, amorphousness, elusiveness. An opportunist, by his very nature, **will always evade taking a clear and decisive stand**, he will always seek a middle course, he will always wriggle like a snake between two mutually exclusive points of view and try to "agree" with both and reduce his differences of opinion to petty amendments, doubts, innocent and pious suggestions, and so on and so forth. Comrade Eduard Bernstein, an opportunist in questions of programme, "agrees" with the revolutionary programme of his party, and although he would no doubt like to have it "radically revised", he considers this untimely, inexpedient, not so important as the elucidation of "general principles" of "criticism" (which mainly consist in uncritically borrowing principles and catchwords from bourgeois democracy). Comrade von Vollmar, an opportunist in questions of tactics, also agrees with the old tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy and also confines himself mostly to declamations, petty amendments, and sneers rather than openly advocates any definite "ministerial" tactics. Comrades Martov and Axelrod, opportunists in questions of organisation, have also failed so far to produce,

though directly challenged to do so, any definite statement of principles that could be **“fixed by statute”**; they too would like, they most certainly would like, a “radical revision” of our Rules of Organisation (Iskra, No. 58, p. 2, col. 3), but they would prefer to devote themselves first to **“general problems of organisation”** (for a really radical revision of our Rules, which, in spite of Paragraph 1, are centralist Rules, would inevitably lead, if carried out in the spirit of the new Iskra, to autonomism; and Comrade Martov, of course, does not like to admit even to himself that he tends in principle towards autonomism). **Their “principles” of organisation therefore display all the colours of the rainbow.** The predominant item consists of innocent passionate **declamations against autocracy and bureaucracy**, against blind obedience and cogs and wheels—declamations so innocent that it is still very difficult to discern in them what is really concerned with principle and what is really concerned with co-optation. But as it goes on, the thing gets worse: **attempts to analyse and precisely define this detestable “bureaucracy” inevitably lead to autonomism**; attempts to “lend profundity” to their stand and vindicate it inevitably **lead to justifying backwardness, to tail-ism**, to Girondist phrase-mongering. At last **there emerges the principle of anarchism**, as the sole really definite principle, which for that reason stands out in practice in particular relief (practice is always in advance of theory). Sneering at discipline—autonomism—anarchism—there you have the ladder which our opportunism in matters of organisation now climbs and now descends, skipping from rung to rung and **skillfully dodging any definite statement** of its principles. Exactly the same stages are displayed by opportunism in matters of programme and tactics: sneering at “orthodoxy”, narrowness, and immobility—revisionist “criticism” and ministerialism—bourgeois democracy.

Lenin

## Old and New

December 10, 1911.

Collected Works, Volume 17, pages 388-392.

Nik. Nikolin's article in *Zvezda*, No. 29, characteristically entitled "The New in the Old", raises a number of extremely interesting and important questions. A discussion on these questions is undoubtedly desirable in order to lay down an exact, clear, and definite line of conduct for adherents to the Russian working-class democratic movement.

The chief shortcoming of Nik. Nikolin's article is that many of his propositions are extremely vague. The author says, without explaining why, that "on many points" he would "perhaps disagree" with me. I, for my part, must say that none of Nikolin's propositions call for disagreement, since he never makes outspoken statements.

Thus, for instance, Nikolin comes out dead against people who believe that "our present situation ... is approximately what it was at the beginning of the twentieth century". According to his interpretation, people holding such an opinion deny that there is something new in the old. Of course, they are wrong if they deny that. And, of course, Nikolin is a thousand times right when he says that there is something new in the old which it is necessary to take into consideration and make use of. But Nikolin **says nothing as to what the new consists of, as to how exactly it is to be taken into consideration**, etc. On the other hand, it is not clear from the passages he quotes what exactly his opponents mean by the word "approximately". If the new in the old is to be taken into consideration in the same way as the Russian Marxists did exactly three years ago in their appraisal of the political situation

created after the three years of storm and stress (i.e., after 1905–07), then, in my opinion, it would not be wrong to say: “our present situation is approximately what it was at the beginning of the twentieth century”. If, however, people put forward a proposition of this kind without, at first, giving a precise, clear, and definite appraisal of the situation and the problems involved, then, of course, it is wrong.

The old problems, **the old methods of solving them, and new ways of preparing for the solution**—that, it seems to me, is how, approximately, the answer given three years ago could be formulated. From the standpoint of this answer, participation in the Third Duma, which Nik. Nikolin advocates so warmly and so correctly, appears to be absolutely indispensable. The “trend” which repudiates this participation, or which hesitates to come out, openly, clearly, and without beating about the bush, in favour of participating in the Third Duma, is taking the name of working-class democracy in vain. Actually, this is a trend outside working-class democracy, for **it represents a “legitimate shade” of anarchist ideas but by no means of Marxist ideas.**

Take the question of the “superstructure”. “Formerly,” writes Nik. Nikolin, **“it may have seemed that the bureaucracy was the sole and chief enemy of ‘all Russia’; today nobody thinks so any longer....** We are sufficiently well aware that the Markovs, Krestovnikovs, Volkonskys, Purishkeviches, Guchkovs, Khomyakovs, Avdakovs, and their like, are **all representatives of that particular social milieu from which the bureaucracy draws its strength** and obtains the motives for its activity.”

Nik. Nikolin’s emphasis on the connection of the “bureaucracy” **with the upper ranks of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie** is quite correct and extremely valuable. Only people who have never given a thought to the new brought by the first decade of the twentieth century, who understand nothing about

the interdependence between the economic and the political relations in Russia and about the significance of the Third Duma can deny that this connection exists, deny that the present agrarian policy is bourgeois in character, deny in general that "a step" has been taken "towards the transformation into a bourgeois monarchy".

But **it is not enough to concede that the connection exists**, it is necessary to point out **what exactly is the actual nature of this connection**. The step taken toward the **transformation into something new by no means eliminates the old**, say, "bureaucratic" regime with its vast self-sufficiency and independence, with its "peculiar nature" which the methods of Tolmachov and Reinbot (etc., et al.) lend it, **and with its uncontrolled finances**. While "drawing strength" from the support of the upper ranks of the bourgeoisie the bureaucracy is not recruited from the bourgeoisie, but from the old, very old, not only pre-revolutionary (before '905), but even pre-Reform (before 1861), landed and office-holding nobility. While it "obtains the motives for its activity" largely from the upper ranks of the bourgeoisie the bureaucracy lends its bourgeois activity a tendency and a form that is purely and solely feudal. For, if there is a difference between the bourgeois character of the Prussian Junker and the American farmer (although both of them are unquestionably bourgeois), there is a no less evident and equally great difference between the bourgeois character of the Prussian Junker and the "bourgeois character" of Markov and Purishkevich. Compared with the latter, the Prussian Junker is quite a "European"!

The principal, cardinal, and fatal mistake which, for instance, M. Alexandrov commits in his well-known pamphlet is that he forgets about the vast self-sufficiency and independence of the "bureaucracy"; and N. R-kov, in No. 9-10 of the liquidationist

Nasha Zarya, indulges in this mistake to a point where it is reduced to an absurdity. Only the above-mentioned answer given three years ago contains an exact definition of the extent to which the old persists in the so-called "bureaucratic" regime, and of the changes, or, rather, modifications, that have been introduced by the "new".

I am by no means opposed to the "exploration of other ways and means", and I attach vast importance to constant and repeated discussion of the direct answers to the vexed questions, but I cannot refrain, however, from voicing my protest against the contraband that the liquidators, for example, are smuggling in under the flag of "exploration". It is obvious that the differences of opinion between the "exploring" R-kov and the "exploring" Potresovs, Yezhovs, and Chatskys concern only details of their liberal labour policy. The stand taken by all these "explorers" is that of a liberal, not a Marxist, labour policy! It is one thing to "explore ways" and discuss them from a Marxist standpoint in books, magazines, etc.; and it is a different thing to come out with definite answers in publications giving practical guidance.

Take the question of "romanticism". Nik Nikolin condemns romanticism as a hopelessly obsolete feature of the "old" and cites the following example: "The liberal thought that he was performing the part of champion of all the oppressed, while the socialist believed that he was backed by all 'thinking' and 'labouring' Russia". The example refers to the failure to understand the class struggle, and Nikolin would have been perfectly right, of course, had he said that such a "socialist" — obviously a Narodnik — was really no socialist at all but a democrat who cloaked his democracy with pseudo-socialist phrases. But in speaking of romanticism, one must not overlook the Vekhi, i.e., counter-revolutionary, interpretation of that term which is current in the most widely circulated, namely, the

liberal press. We cannot help protesting against such an interpretation. We cannot help noting the “new” feature, namely, that liberalism in Russia has given rise to the liberal trend of the Vekhi type, the policy which the Milyukovs actually pursue although in words they renounce it for purely diplomatic reasons.

Hence the following practical conclusion of major importance: on the basis of the “new” experience of the first ten years of the twentieth century, the line of demarcation between liberalism and democracy must be drawn more sharply. It is, of course, absurd to “lump the liberal opposition with reaction”, but this conclusion alone (which Nikolin draws), without the one I have just indicated, is decidedly insufficient.

In general, it must be said that it is in his conclusion that Nik. Nikolin commits his chief sin—that of being vague and leaving things unsaid. Take the first part of his conclusion: “Both the unreasonable infatuation with the old methods of action and the emphatically negative attitude to those methods are equally harmful”. In my opinion this is not a dialectical, but an eclectic, conclusion. The unreasonable is unreasonable, and therefore it is always and absolutely harmful—that goes without saying. In order to lend this part of the conclusion a vital, dialectical significance, it would have to be couched in approximately the following terms: an attempt to justify the refusal to take part in the Third or in, the Fourth Duma by references to the old methods of action would be an extremely grave mistake, a hollow phrase, a meaningless cry, in spite of the fact, or—more correctly—because of the fact, that we must have an emphatically positive attitude to those methods. It is just in passing, since it is impossible for me to dwell on this question in greater detail, that I have thus indicated how, in my opinion, the second part of the quoted conclusion ought to be corrected.

Lenin

## Controversial Issues

Collected Works, Volume 19, pages 147-169.

1913

### AN OPEN PARTY AND THE MARXISTS

#### IV. THE CLASS SIGNIFICANCE OF LIQUIDATIONISM

In the preceding articles (Pravda Nos. 289, 299 and 314) we showed that all the Marxists, both in 1908 and in 1910, irrevocably condemned liquidationism as renunciation of the past. The Marxists explained to the working class that liquidationism is the spreading of bourgeois influence among the proletariat. And all the liquidationist publications, from 1909 up to 1913, have flagrantly violated the decisions of the Marxists.

Let us consider the slogan, an “open workers’ party”, or “a struggle for an open party”, which the liquidators are still advocating in Luck and Nasha Zarya.

**Is this a Marxist, proletarian slogan,** or a liberal, bourgeois slogan?

The answer must be sought not in the attitude or plans of the liquidators or of other groups, but in an analysis of the relation of social forces in Russia in the present period. The significance of slogans is determined not by the intentions of their authors, but by the relation of forces of all the classes in the country.

The **feudal-minded landowners and their “bureaucracy”** are hostile to all changes making for political liberty. This is understandable. The bourgeoisie, because of its economic position in a backward and semi-feudal country, must strive for freedom. But **the bourgeoisie fears the activity of the people**

more than it fears reaction. This truth was demonstrated with particular clarity in 1905; it is fully understood by the working class, but not by opportunist and semi-liberal intellectuals.

**The bourgeoisie are both liberal and counter-revolutionary.** Hence their ridiculously impotent and wretched reformism. **They dream of reforms and fear to settle accounts in real earnest** with the feudal-minded landowners who not only refuse to grant reforms, but even withdraw those already granted. **They preach reforms and fear the popular movement.** They strive to oust the landowners, but fear to lose their support and fear to lose their own privileges. It is upon this relation of classes that the June Third system has been built up, which gives unlimited power to the feudal landowners and privileges to the bourgeoisie.

The class position of the proletariat makes it altogether impossible for it to “share” privileges or be afraid of anyone losing them. That is why selfishly narrow, miserable and dull-witted reformism is quite foreign to the proletariat. As to the peasant masses—on the one hand they are immeasurably oppressed, and instead of enjoying privileges suffer from starvation; on the other hand, they are undoubtedly petty bourgeois—hence, they inevitably vacillate between the liberals and the workers.

Such is the objective situation.

From this situation it clearly follows that the slogan of an open working-class party is, in its class origin, a slogan of the counter-revolutionary liberals. It contains nothing save reformism; it does not contain even a hint that the proletariat, the only thoroughly democratic class, is conscious that its task is one of fighting the liberals for influence over democrats as a whole; there is not even a suggestion of removing the foundation of all the privileges of

the feudal-minded landowners, of the “bureaucracy”, etc.; there is not a thought of the general basis of political liberty or of a democratic Constitution; instead, this slogan implies the tacit renunciation of the old, and consequently, renegacy and the dissolution (liquidation) of the workers’ party.

In brief. In a period of counter-revolution this slogan spreads among the workers the advocacy of the very thing the liberal bourgeoisie are themselves practising. Therefore, had there been no liquidators, the clever bourgeois Progressists would have had to find, or hire, intellectuals to advocate this to the working class!

Only the foolish people will seek to compare the words of the liquidators with their motives. Their words must be compared with the deeds and the objective position of the liberal bourgeoisie.

Look at these deeds. In 1902, the bourgeoisie was in favour of the underground. It commissioned Struve to publish the underground *Osvobozhdeniye*. When the working-class movement led to October 17, the liberals and the Cadets abandoned the underground, then repudiated it, and declared it to be useless, mad, sinful and godless (*Vekhi*). Instead of the underground, the liberal bourgeoisie favoured a struggle for an open party. This is an historical fact, confirmed by the incessant attempts at legalisation made by the Cadets (1905–07) and the Progressists (1913).

Among the Cadets we see “open work and its secret organisation”; the kind-hearted, i.e., unwitting, liquidator, A. Vlasov, has only retold the deeds of the Cadets “in his own words”.

Why did the liberals renounce the underground and adopt the slogan of “a struggle for an open party”? Was it because Struve is a traitor? No, just the opposite. Struve went over to the other

side because the entire bourgeoisie took a turn. And the bourgeoisie turned (1) because it obtained privileges on December 11, 1905, and even on June 3, 1907 obtained the status of a tolerated opposition; (2) because it was itself mortally afraid of the popular movement. The slogan of "a struggle for an open party", translated from the language of "high politics" into plain and intelligible language, means the following:

"Landowners! Don't imagine that we want to make life impossible for you. No, just move up a little and make room for us bourgeois [an open party, we shall then defend you five times more 'intelligently', ingenuously, 'scientifically' than the Timoshkins and Sabler's parsons did."

**The petty-bourgeois Narodniks**, in imitation of the Cadets, took up the slogan of "a struggle for an open party". In August 1906, Messrs. Peshekhonov and Co. of Russkoye Bogatstvo renounced the underground, proclaimed the "struggle for an open party", and cut the consistently democratic "underground" slogans out of their programme.

Thanks to their reformist chatter about a "broad and open party", these philistines have been left, as all can see, without any party, without any contact with the masses, while the Cadets have even stopped thinking of such contacts.

**Only in this way, only by analysing the position of the classes, by analysing the general history of the counter revolution**, is it possible to understand the nature of liquidationism. The liquidators are petty-bourgeois intellectuals, sent by the bourgeoisie **to sow liberal corruption among the workers**. The liquidators are traitors to Marxism and traitors to democracy. The slogan of "a struggle for an open party" in their case (as in the case of the liberals and the Narodniks) only serves to camouflage their renunciation of the past and their rupture with

the working class. This is a fact that has been proved both by the elections in the worker curia for the Fourth Duma and by the history of the founding of the workers' paper Pravda. It is obvious to all that contact with the masses has been maintained only by those who have not renounced the past and who know how to make use of "open work" and of all and sundry "possibilities" exclusively in the spirit of that past, and for the purpose of strengthening, consolidating and developing it.

In the period of the June Third system it could not be otherwise.

Lenin

### **What the Counter-Revolutionary Steps of the Provisional Government Lead To**

May 11 (April 28), 1917.

Collected Works, Volume 24, pages 321-323.

We have received the following telegram:

“Yeniseisk. The Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies has taken cognisance of Minister Lvov’s telegram to the appointed Commissar of Yeniseisk Gubernia, Krutovsky, sent to Yeniseisk for guidance.

“We protest against the intention to reintroduce a bureaucracy. We declare, first, that we will not stand for being ruled by appointed officials. Second, there can be no return for officials who have been driven out by the peasants. Third, we recognise only such local bodies as have been set up in Yeniseisk Uyezd by the people themselves. Fourth, appointed officials can rule here only over our dead bodies.

“Yeniseisk Soviet of Deputies”

And so, the Provisional Government appoints “commissars” from Petrograd to “direct” the activities of the Yeniseisk Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies, or the Yeniseisk organ of self-government. What is more, this appointment is made in such a form as to evoke the protest of the Yeniseisk Soviet against “the intention to reintroduce a bureaucracy”.

Moreover, the Yeniseisk Soviet declares that “appointed officials can rule here only over our dead bodies”. The behaviour of the Provisional Government has brought this remote uyezd in Siberia, as represented by its popularly elected governing body,

to a point when a direct threat of armed resistance is made against the Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government bosses have certainly asked for it!

Yet they will go on thundering denunciations against those mischievous people who “preach” “civil war”!

What was the idea of appointing “commissars” from Petrograd or from any other centre to “direct” the activities of the elected local body? **Are we to believe that a man from outside is more familiar with local needs, more capable of “directing” the local population?** What cause did the people of Yeniseisk give for such an absurd measure? Even if the people of Yeniseisk did run counter to the decisions of a majority of citizens in other localities, would it not have been better to try, for a start, to obtain some information instead of giving occasion for talk about “bureaucracy”, and provoking legitimate dissatisfaction and resentment on the part of the local population?

To all these questions there can be only one answer. The representatives of the landowners and capitalists sitting in the Provisional Government are determined to preserve the old tsarist machinery of government: officials “appointed” from above. That is what all bourgeois parliamentary republics in the world have nearly always been doing, except for brief periods of revolution in some countries. That is what was done to prepare the ground for the return from a republic to a monarchy, for a return to the Napoleons, to the military dictators. And that is what the Cadets are bent on doing when they copy those unhappy examples.

This is a very serious matter. We should not deceive ourselves. By such measures the Provisional Government, whether it means to or not, is preparing the ground for a restoration of the monarchy in Russia.

The entire responsibility for any possible—and to a certain extent inevitable—attempt to restore the monarchy in Russia rests with the Provisional Government, which is undertaking such counter-revolutionary measures. **Officials “appointed” from above to “direct” the local population have always been a sure step towards the restoration of the monarchy,** in the same way as the standing army and the police.

The Yeniseisk Soviet is a thousand times right, both practically and in principle. The return of local officials who have been driven out by the peasants should not be allowed. The introduction of “appointed” officials should not be tolerated. Only such bodies in the local areas should be recognised as have been set up by the people themselves.

The idea of “direction” by officials “appointed” from above is essentially false and undemocratic, it is Caesarism, Blanquist adventurism. Engels was quite right when, in criticising in 1891 the draft programme of the German Social-Democrats who were badly infected with bureaucratism, he pressed the demand for no supervision from above over local self-government. Engels was right when he quoted the experience of France, which, governed between 1792 and 1798 by local elective bodies without any supervision from above, did not “fall apart”, did not “disintegrate”, but, on the contrary, gained strength, became democratically consolidated and organised.

**Foolish bureaucratic prejudices,** tsarist red-tapism, reactionary professorial ideas as to the indispensability of bureaucratism, the counter-revolutionary tendencies and attempts of the landowners and capitalists—this is the soil which nourishes such measures of the Provisional Government as we have been discussing.

The healthy democratic feeling of the workers and peasants, roused by the insulting attempt of the Provisional Government to “appoint” officials from above to “direct” the activities of the adult local population, the overwhelming majority, who had elected their own representatives—this is what the Yeniseisk Soviet has revealed.

**What the people need is a really democratic, workers’ and peasants’ republic, whose authorities have been elected by the people and are displaceable by the people any time they may wish it.** And it is for such a republic that the workers and peasants should fight, resisting all attempts of the Provisional Government to restore the monarchist, tsarist methods and machinery of government.

Lenin

## **From State and Revolution**

September 1917

Kautsky has not reflected at all on Marx's words: **"The Commune was a working, not parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time."**

Kautsky has not understood at all the difference between bourgeois parliamentarism, which combines democracy (not for the people) with bureaucracy (against the people), and proletarian democracy, which will take immediate steps to cut bureaucracy down to the roots, and which will be able to carry these measures through to the end, to the complete abolition of bureaucracy, to the introduction of complete democracy for the people.

Kautsky here displays the same old "superstitious reverence" for the state, and "superstitious belief" in bureaucracy.

(..)

His question about officials clearly shows that he does not understand the lessons of the Commune or the teachings of Marx. **"We cannot do without officials even in the party and the trade unions...."**

We cannot do without officials under capitalism, under the rule of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat is oppressed, the working people are enslaved by capitalism. Under capitalism, democracy is restricted, cramped, curtailed, mutilated by all the conditions of wage slavery, and the poverty and misery of the people. This and this alone is the reason why the functionaries of our political organizations and trade unions are corrupted – or rather tend to be corrupted—**by the conditions of capitalism and betray a**

**tendency to become bureaucrats**, i.e., privileged persons divorced from the people and standing above the people.

**That is the essence of bureaucracy**; and until the capitalists have been expropriated and the bourgeoisie overthrown, **even proletarian functionaries will inevitably be “bureaucratized” to a certain extent.**

According to Kautsky, since elected functionaries will remain under socialism, so will officials, so will the bureaucracy! This is exactly where he is wrong. Marx, referring to the example of the Commune, showed that under socialism functionaries will cease to be “bureaucrats”, to be “officials”, they will cease to be so in proportion as—in addition to the principle of election of officials—the principle of recall at any time is also introduced, as salaries are reduced to the level of the wages of the average workman, and as parliamentary institutions are replaced by “working bodies, executive and legislative at the same time”.

As a matter of fact, the whole of Kautsky’s argument against Pannekoek, and particularly the former’s wonderful point that we cannot do without officials even in our party and trade union organizations, is merely a repetition of Bernstein’s old “arguments” against Marxism in general. In his renegade book, *The Premises of Socialism*, Bernstein combats the ideas of “primitive” democracy, combats what he calls “doctrinaire democracy”: binding mandates, unpaid officials, impotent central representative bodies, etc. to prove that this “primitive” democracy is unsound, Bernstein refers to the experience of the British trade unions, as interpreted by the Webbs.[4] Seventy years of development “in absolute freedom”, he says (p.137, German edition), convinced the trade unions that primitive democracy was useless, and they replaced it by ordinary democracy, i.e., parliamentarism combined with bureaucracy.

In reality, the trade unions did not develop "in absolute freedom" but in absolute capitalist slavery, under which, it goes without saying, a number of concessions to the prevailing evil, violence, falsehood, exclusion of the poor from the affairs of "higher" administration, "cannot be done without". **Under socialism much of "primitive" democracy will inevitably be revived**, since, for the first time in the history of civilized society the mass of population will rise to taking an independent part, not only in voting and elections, but also in the everyday administration of the state. Under socialism all will govern in turn and will soon become accustomed to no one governing.

Marx's critico-analytical genius saw in the practical measures of the Commune the turning-point which the opportunists fear and do not want to recognize because of their cowardice, because they do not want to break irrevocably with the bourgeoisie, and which the anarchists do not want to see, either because they are in a hurry or because they do not understand at all the conditions of great social changes. "We must not even think of destroying the old state machine; how can we do without ministries and officials?" argues the opportunist, who is completely saturated with philistinism and who, at bottom, not only does not believe in revolution, in the creative power of revolution, but lives in mortal dread of it (like our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries).

"We must think only of destroying the old state machine; it is no use probing into the concrete lessons of earlier proletarian revolutions and analyzing what to put in the place of what has been destroyed, and how," argues the anarchist (the best of the anarchist, of course, and not those who, following the Kropotkins and Co., trail behind the bourgeoisie). Consequently, the tactics of the anarchist become the tactics of despair instead of a ruthlessly bold revolutionary effort to solve concrete problems

while taking into account the practical conditions of the mass movement.

**Marx teaches us to avoid both errors;** he teaches us to act with supreme boldness in destroying the entire old state machine, and at the same time he teaches us to put the question concretely: the Commune was able in the space of a few weeks to start building a new, proletarian state machine by introducing such-and-such measures to provide wider democracy and to uproot bureaucracy. Let us learn revolutionary boldness from the Communards; let us see in their practical measures the outline of really urgent and immediately possible measures, and then, following this road, we shall achieve the complete destruction of bureaucracy.

The possibility of this destruction is guaranteed by the fact that **socialism will shorten the working day, will raise the people to a new life,** will create such conditions for the majority of the population as will enable everybody, without exception, to perform “state functions”, and this will lead to the complete withering away of every form of state in general.

Lenin

To: **THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS**

Collected Works, Volume 35, page 433.

January 16, 1920

To Comrade Tomsy, with a request to bring this before the All-Russia C.C.T.U. and the Communist group in the All-Russia C.C.T.U.

Dear Comrades,

I send you herewith a report on the astonishing **red tape**, carelessness, bureaucracy and helplessness displayed in a most important practical matter.

I have **never doubted that there is still very much bureaucracy** in our Commissariats, in all of them.

But I did not expect that there would be no less bureaucracy in the trade unions.

This is the greatest disgrace. I very much ask you to read all these documents in the Communist group of the All-Russia C.C.T.U., and to work out practical measures for combating bureaucracy, red tape, idleness and helplessness.

Please be good enough to let me know the results.

Melnichansky himself rang me up about these 10,000 metalworkers. I made a fuss at the People's Commissariat of Railways, and now Comrade Melnichansky has let me down....

With communist greetings, V. Ulyanov (Lenin)

Lenin

## **From; The Party Crisis**

19 January 1921

The legend was exploded that very day, December 30, by Rudzutak, who pointed out that Lyubimov “did not exist” on the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions, that in its presidium Holtzmann had voted against these theses, and that they had been drawn up by a commission consisting of Andreyev, Tsiperovich and himself.

But let us for a moment assume that Comrades Trotsky and Bukharin’s legend is true. Nothing so completely defeats them as such an assumption. For what is the conclusion if the “Tsektranites” had inserted their “new” ideas into Rudzutak’s resolution, if Rudzutak had accepted them, if all the trade unions had adopted this resolution (November 2-6!), and if Bukharin and Trotsky have nothing to say against it?

**It is that all of Trotsky’s disagreements are artificial**, that neither he nor the “Tsektranites” have any “new tasks or methods”, and that everything practical and substantive had been said, adopted and decided upon by the trade unions, even before the question was raised in the Central Committee.

If anyone ought to be taken thoroughly to task and “shaken up”, it is not the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions but the Central Committee of the R.C.P., for having “overlooked” Rudzutak’s theses, a mistake which allowed an altogether empty discussion to flare up. There is nothing to cover up the mistake of the Tsektranites (which is not an excessive one but is, in essence, a very common one, consisting in some exaggeration of bureaucracy). What is more, it needs to be rectified, and not covered up, toned down or justified. That’s all there is to it.

(...)

Our platform up to now has been: **Do not defend but rectify the bureaucratic excesses.** The fight against bureaucracy **is a long and arduous one.** Excesses can and must be rectified at once. It is not those who point out harmful excesses and strive to rectify them **but those who resist** rectification that undermine the prestige of the military workers and appointees. Such were the excesses of certain Tsektranites who, however, will continue to be (and have been) valuable workers. There is no need to harass the trade unions by inventing disagreements with them, when they themselves have decided upon and accepted all that is new, business-like and practical in the tasks of the trade unions in production. On this basis, let us vigorously work together for practical results.

Lenin

To: G. Y. SOKOLNIKOV

Collected Works, Volume 35, pages 549-550.

February 22, 1922

Comrade Sokolnikov,

The question is not just of GUM alone. All the work of all our economic bodies suffers most of all from bureaucracy. Communists have become bureaucrats. If anything will destroy us, it is this. And for the State Bank it is most dangerous of all to be bureaucratic. We are still thinking in terms of decrees, of institutions. This is the mistake. The whole essence now is practical men and practice. To find people who are men of business (1 out of 100; 1 out of 1,000 Communists, and that only with God's help); to transform our decrees out of dirty paper (it's all the same whether they are bad or good decrees) into living practice—that is the essence.

Whether the State Bank itself should trade, or through subordinate firms, through its agents, or through its client debtors, etc.—I don't know. I don't take it upon myself to judge, because I am **not sufficiently acquainted with the technique** of currency circulation and banking business. But what I do know firmly is that the whole problem now is the rapid development of state trade (in all its varieties: co-operation, clients of the State Bank, mixed companies, factors, agents, etc., etc.).

February 28

On account of my illness I did not finish and send away this letter. You speak (in your interview) about replacing state trusts by mixed companies. There will be no practical results. The clever capitalists will draw stupid (most honest and most

virtuous) Communists into the mixed companies and swindle us as they are swindling us now. The problem now is not one of institutions but of people, and of checking up on practical experience. One by one we must discover people who know how to trade, and step by step use their experience, their labour, to clean out the..., expelling the virtuous Communists from boards of management, shutting down sleepy (and strictly communist) enterprises, shutting them down, separating out the one per cent which are worthwhile. Either the People's Commissariat of Finance will prove able to get over to such work, or the entire People's Commissariat of Finance.

Yours,

Lenin

Lenin

**From; To: A. D. TSYURUPA**

February 1922

Collected Works, Volume 35, pages 535-542.

DRAFT DIRECTIVE REGARDING THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL OF LABOUR AND DEFENCE, THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS AND ALSO THE NARROW COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS

The chief defect of these institutions is that **they are overburdened with trivial matters. As a result, they are floundering in bureaucracy instead of fighting it.**

The causes of this evil are: (1) the weakness of the Managing Department, (2) the inability of the People's Commissars to climb out of the mire of trivialities and bureaucratic details, (3) the desire of the People's Commissars (and still more that of their departmental bureaucrats who egg them on) to shift responsibility on to the C.P.C., (4) last and most important—the fact that responsible workers do not realise that the order of the day now is to fight the sea of paper and show distrust of it and of the eternal “reorganisations”, that the first task of the moment is not decrees, not reorganisations but selection of people; establishment of individual responsibility for what is being done; checking-up on work actually performed. Otherwise we shall not climb out of the bureaucracy and red tape which are throttling us.

The Narrow Council of People's Commissars, the C.L.D. and the C.P.C. must go all out to get rid of trivialities, teaching the People's Commissariats to settle minor matters themselves and to answer for them more strictly.

The staff of the Managing Department of the C.P.C. must regard as its main task the practical realisation of the following: to reduce the number of matters coming before the Narrow C.P.C., the C.L.D. and the C.P.C., and to ensure that the People's Commissars (severally and jointly) should decide more themselves and answer for it; to shift the centre of gravity to checking up on effective fulfilment.

For the same purpose, the Deputy Chairmen of the C.P.C., Comrades Rykov and Tsyurupa, must go all out to free themselves of trivial matters and commissions, fight against attempts to drag them (the deputies) into matters which should be settled by the People's Commissars; devote two or three hours a day, as a minimum, to making the personal acquaintance of the responsible workers (not the grantees) of the most important (and later, all) People's Commissariats, in order to check up and select people; make use of the staff of the Managing Department of the C.P.C. and some of the members of the Narrow Council, and also the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, to check up on the work actually done and what success it has had; in short, they should become practical instructors in administrative work, such as we lack most of all.

Distrust of decrees, of institutions, of "reorganisations" and of grantees, especially among Communists; struggle against the mire of bureaucracy and red tape by checking up on people and on the actual work done; merciless expulsion of unnecessary officials, reduction of staff, replacement of Communists who don't study the art of management seriously—such must be the line of the People's Commissars and the C.P.C., of its Chairman and his Deputy Chairmen.

Lenin

February 27

Stalin

**From; Three years of Proletarian Dictatorship**

Report Delivered at a Celebration Meeting of the Baku Soviet  
November 6, 1920

THE FIRST PERIOD

Three years ago, on October 25 (or November 7, New Style), 1917, a handful of Bolshevik members of the Petrograd Soviet met and decided to surround Ke-rensky's palace, take prisoner his already demoralized troops, and transfer power to the Second Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies, which was then assembled.

At that time many looked upon us as cranks at the best, and as "agents of German imperialism" at the worst.

Internationally, this period could be called the period of the complete isolation of Soviet Russia.

Not only were the surrounding bourgeois states hostile to Russia; even our socialist "comrades" in the West looked upon us with distrust.

If Soviet Russia nevertheless survived as a state, it was only because the Western imperialists were then absorbed in a fierce struggle among themselves. Furthermore, they looked upon the Bolshevik experiment in Russia with scorn: they believed that the Bolsheviks would die a natural death.

Internally, this period may be described as the period of the destruction of the old order in Russia, of the destruction of the entire apparatus of the old bourgeois power.

We knew from theory that the proletariat cannot simply take over the old state machine and set it going. That theoretical

precept, taught us by Marx, was fully confirmed in practice when we found ourselves in a regular phase of sabotage on the part of the tsarist officials, office employees and a certain section of the upper proletariat—a phase of complete disorganization of state power.

The first and most important apparatus of the bourgeois state, the old army and its generals, was thrown on to the scrap heap. That cost us very dear. It left us for a time without any army at all, and we had to sign the Brest peace. But there was no alternative; history offered us no other way of emancipating the proletariat.

Another and equally important apparatus of the bourgeoisie which was destroyed, thrown on to the scrap heap, was the bureaucracy, the apparatus of bourgeois administration.

In the sphere of economic administration of the country, the most notable thing was that the banks, the main nerve of the bourgeois economic organism, were taken out of the hands of the bourgeoisie. The banks were taken out of the hands of the bourgeoisie, and the latter was, so to speak, deprived of its soul. Then came the work of breaking up the old economic machinery and expropriating the bourgeoisie—depriving it of the mills and factories and turning them over to the working class. Lastly came the break-up of the old machinery of food supply and the attempt to build a new one capable of procuring food and distributing it among the population. Finally, there was the abolition of the Constituent Assembly. These, roughly, were the measures Soviet Russia had to take in this period in order to destroy the bourgeois state apparatus.

Stalin

**From; The Party's Tasks**

Report Delivered at an Enlarged Meeting of the Krasnaya Presnya District Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) With Group Organisers, Members of the Debating Society and of the Bureau of the Party Units

December 2, 1923

The second cause is that **our state apparatus, which is bureaucratic to a considerable degree**, exerts a certain amount of pressure on the Party and the Party workers. In 1917, when we were forging ahead, towards October, we imagined that we would have a Commune, a free association of working people, that we would put an end to bureaucracy in government institutions, and that it would be possible, **if not in the immediate period, then within two or three short periods**, to transform the state into a free association of working people. **Practice has shown, however, that this is still an ideal which is a long way off**, that to rid the state of the elements of bureaucracy, to transform Soviet society into a free association of working people, **the people must have a high level of culture, peace conditions must be fully guaranteed all around us** so as to **remove the necessity of maintaining a large standing army**, which entails heavy expenditure and cumbersome administrative departments, the very existence of which leaves its impress upon all the other state institutions. **Our state apparatus is bureaucratic to a considerable degree, and it will remain so for a long time to come**. Our Party comrades work in this apparatus, and the situation—I might say the atmosphere—in this bureaucratic apparatus is such that it helps to bureaucratise our Party workers and our Party organisations.

Stalin

**From; The Discussion, Rafail, the Articles by Preobrazhensky  
and Sapronov, and Trotsky's Letter**

December 15, 1923

Sapronov's Article

Sapronov thinks that the chief cause of the defects in internal Party life is the presence in the Party's apparatuses of "Party pedants," "schoolmistresses," who are busy "teaching the Party members" according to "the school method," and are thus hindering the real training of the Party members in the course of the struggle. Although dubbing the responsible workers in our Party apparatus "schoolmistresses," Sapronov does not think of asking where these people came from, and how it came to pass that "Party pedants" gained control of the work of our Party. Advancing this more than reckless and demagogic proposition as proved, Sapronov forgot that a Marxist cannot be satisfied with mere assertions, but must first of all understand a phenomenon, if it really exists at all, and explain it, in order then to propose effective measures for improvement. But evidently Sapronov does not care a rap about Marxism. He wants at all costs to malign the Party apparatus—and all the rest will follow. And so, in Sapronov's opinion, the evil will of "Party pedants" is the cause of the defects in our internal Party life. An excellent explanation, it must be admitted.

Only we do not understand:

- 1) How could these "schoolmistresses" and "Party pedants" retain the leadership of the most revolutionary proletariat in the world?
- 2) How could our "Party schoolchildren" who are being taught by these "schoolmistresses" retain the leadership of the most revolutionary country in the world?

At all events it is clear that it is easier to talk about "Party pedants" than to understand and appreciate the very great merit of our Party apparatus.

How does Sapronov propose to remedy the defects in our internal Party life? His remedy is as simple as his diagnosis. "Change our officers," remove the present responsible workers from their posts—such is Sapronov's remedy. This he regards as the principal guarantee that internal Party democracy will be practised. From the point of view of democracy, I am far from denying the importance of new elections as a means of improving our internal Party life; but to regard that as the principal guarantee means to understand neither internal Party life nor its defects. In the ranks of the opposition there are men like Byeloborodov, whose "democracy" is still remembered by the workers in Rostov; Rosenholtz, whose "democracy" was a misery to our water transport workers and railwaymen; Pyatakov, whose "democracy" made the whole of the Donets Basin not only cry out, but positively howl; Alsky, with the nature of whose "democracy" everybody is familiar; Byk, from whose "democracy" Khorezm is still groaning. Does Sapronov think that if the places of the "Party pedants" are taken by the "esteemed comrades" enumerated above, democracy will triumph in the Party? Permit me to have some doubts about that.

Evidently, **there are two kinds of democracy**: the democracy of the **mass of Party members**, who are eager to display initiative and to take an active part in the work of Party leadership, and the "democracy" of **disgruntled Party big-wigs** who think that dismissing some and putting others in their place is the essence of democracy. The Party will stand for the first kind of democracy and will carry it out with an iron hand. But the Party will throw out the "democracy" of the disgruntled Party big-

wigs, which has nothing in common with genuine internal Party democracy, workers' democracy.

To ensure internal Party democracy it is necessary, first of all, to rid the minds of some of our responsible workers of the survivals and habits of the war period, which cause them to regard the Party not as an independently acting organism, **but as a system of official institutions**. But these survivals cannot be got rid of in a short space of time.

To ensure internal Party democracy it is necessary, secondly, to do away with the pressure exerted by our bureaucratic state apparatus, which has about a million employees, upon our Party apparatus, which has no more than 20,000-30,000 workers. But it is impossible to do away with the pressure of this cumbersome machine and gain mastery over it in a short space of time.

To ensure internal Party democracy it is necessary, thirdly, to raise the cultural level of our backward units, of which there are quite a number, and to distribute our active workers correctly over the entire territory of the Union; but that, too, cannot be achieved in a short space of time.

As you see, to ensure complete democracy is not so simple a matter as Saprnov thinks, that is, of course, if by democracy we mean not Saprnov's empty, formal democracy, but real, workers', genuine democracy.

Obviously, the entire Party from top to bottom must exert its will to ensure and put into effect genuine internal Party democracy.

### **Trotsky's Letter**

The resolution of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission on internal Party democracy, published on December 7, was adopted unanimously. Trotsky voted for this resolution. It might have been expected, therefore, that the

members of the Central Committee, including Trotsky, would come forward in a united front with a call to Party members for unanimous support of the Central Committee and its resolution. This expectation, however, has not been realised. The other day Trotsky issued a letter to the Party conferences which cannot be interpreted otherwise than as an attempt to weaken the will of the Party membership for unity in supporting the Central Committee and its position.

Judge for yourselves.

After **referring to bureaucracy in the Party apparatus and the danger of degeneration of the old guard**, i.e., the Leninists, the main core of our Party, Trotsky writes:

"The **degeneration of the 'old guard'** has been observed in history more than once. Let us take the latest and most glaring historical example: the leaders and the parties of the Second International. We know that Wilhelm Liebknecht, Bebel, Singer, Victor Adler, Kautsky, Bernstein, Lafargue, Guesde, and others, were the immediate and direct pupils of Marx and Engels. We know, however, that all those leaders—some partly, and others wholly—degenerated into opportunism." . . . "**We, that is, we 'old ones,'** must say that our generation, which naturally plays a leading role in the Party, has no self-sufficient guarantee against the gradual and imperceptible weakening of the proletarian and revolutionary spirit, assuming that the Party tolerates a further growth and consolidation of the bureaucratic-apparatus methods of policy which are transforming the younger generation into passive educational material and are inevitably creating estrangement between the apparatus and the membership, between the old and the young." . . . "The youth—the Party's truest barometer—

react most sharply of all against Party bureaucracy." . . .  
"The youth must capture the revolutionary formulas by storm. . . ."

First, I must dispel a possible misunderstanding. **As is evident from his letter, Trotsky includes himself among the Bolshevik old guard**, thereby showing readiness to take upon himself the charges that may be hurled at the old guard if it does indeed take the path of degeneration. It must be admitted that this readiness for self-sacrifice is undoubtedly a noble trait. But **I must protect Trotsky from Trotsky**, because, for obvious reasons, **he cannot, and should not, bear responsibility for the possible degeneration of the principal cadres of the Bolshevik old guard**. Sacrifice is a good thing, of course, but do the old Bolsheviks need it? I think that they do not.

Secondly, it is impossible to understand how opportunists and Mensheviks like Bernstein, Adler, Kautsky, Guesde, and the others, **can be put on a par with the Bolshevik old guard**, which has always fought, and I hope will continue to fight with honour, against opportunism, the Mensheviks and the Second International. What is the cause of this muddle and confusion? Who needs it, bearing in mind the interests of the Party and not ulterior motives that by no means aim at defence of the old guard? How is one to interpret these insinuations about opportunism in relation to the old **Bolsheviks, who matured in the struggle against opportunism?**

Thirdly, I do not by any means think that the old Bolsheviks are absolutely guaranteed against the danger of degeneration any more than I have grounds for asserting that we are absolutely guaranteed against, say, an earthquake. As a possibility, such a danger can and should be assumed. But does this mean that such a danger is real, that it exists? I think that it does not. Trotsky himself has adduced no evidence to show that the danger of

degeneration is a real danger. Nevertheless, there are a number of elements within our Party who are capable of giving rise to a real danger of degeneration of certain ranks of our Party. I have in mind that **section of the Mensheviks who joined our Party unwillingly**, and who have not yet got rid of their old opportunist habits. The following is what Comrade Lenin wrote about these Mensheviks, and about this danger, at the time of the Party purge:

"Every opportunist is distinguished for his adaptability . . . and the Mensheviks, as opportunists, adapt themselves 'on principle,' so to speak, to the prevailing trend among the workers and assume a protective colouring, just as a hare's coat turns white in the winter. It is necessary to know this specific feature of the Mensheviks and take it into account. And taking it into account means **purging the Party of approximately ninety-nine out of every hundred of the Mensheviks** who joined the Russian Communist Party after 1918, i.e., when the victory of the Bolsheviks first became probable and then certain." (see Vol. XXVII, p. 13.)

How could it happen that Trotsky, who lost sight of this and similar, really existing dangers, pushed into the foreground a possible danger, the danger of the degeneration of the Bolshevik old guard? How can one shut one's eyes to a real danger and push into the foreground an unreal, possible danger, if one has the interests of the Party in view and not the object of undermining the prestige of the majority in the Central Committee, the leading core of the Bolshevik old guard? Is it not obvious that "approaches" of this kind can only bring grist to the mill of the opposition?

Fourthly, what reasons did Trotsky have for contrasting the "old ones," who may degenerate, to the "youth," the Party's "truest

barometer"; for contrasting the "old guard," who may become bureaucratic, to the "young guard," which must "capture the revolutionary formulas by storm"? What grounds had he for drawing this contrast, and what did he need it for? Have not the youth and the old guard always marched in a united front against internal and external enemies? Is not the unity between the "old ones" and the "young ones" the basic strength of our revolution? What was the object of this attempt to discredit the old guard and demagogically to flatter the youth if not to cause and widen a fissure between these principal detachments of our Party? Who needs all this, if one has the interests of the Party in view, its unity and solidarity, and not an attempt to shake this unity for the benefit of the opposition?

Is that the way to defend the Central Committee and its resolution on internal Party democracy, which, moreover, was adopted unanimously?

But evidently, that was not Trotsky's object in issuing his letter to the Party conferences. Evidently there was a different intention here, namely: diplomatically to support the opposition in its struggle against the Central Committee of the Party while pretending to support the Central Committee's resolution.

That, in fact, explains the stamp of duplicity that Trotsky's letter bears.

Trotsky is in a bloc with the Democratic Centralists and with a section of the "Left" Communists—therein lies the political significance of Trotsky's action.

Pravda, No. 285, December 15, 1923

J. V. Stalin

**From; Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B)**

January 16-18, 1924

....The second obstacle to the implementation of democracy in the Party is the pressure of the bureaucratic state apparatus on the Party apparatus, on our Party workers. The pressure of this unwieldy apparatus on our Party workers is not always noticeable, not always does it strike the eye, but it never relaxes for an instant. The ultimate effect of this pressure of the unwieldy bureaucratic state apparatus is that a number of our functionaries, both at the centre and in the localities, often involuntarily and quite unconsciously, deviate from inner-Party democracy, from the line which they believe to be correct, but which they are often unable to carry out completely. You can well visualise it: the bureaucratic state apparatus with not less than a million employees, largely elements alien to the Party, and our Party apparatus with not more than 20,000-30,000 people, who are called upon to bring the state apparatus under the Party's sway and make it a socialist apparatus. What would our state apparatus be worth without the support of the Party? Without the assistance and support of our Party apparatus, it would not be worth much, unfortunately. And every time our Party apparatus extends its feelers into the various branches of the state administration, it is quite often obliged to adapt, Party activities there to those of the state apparatus. Concretely: the Party has to carry on work for the political education of the working class, to heighten the latter's political understanding, but at the same time there is the tax in kind to be collected, some campaign or other that has to be carried out; for without these campaigns, without the assistance of the Party, the state apparatus cannot cope with its duties. And here our Party functionaries find themselves between two fires—they must

rectify the line of the state apparatus, which still works according to old patterns, and at the same time they must retain contact with the workers. And often enough they themselves become bureaucratized...

Trotsky's fifth error is to raise in his letters the argument and slogan that the Party must march in step with the student youth, "our Party's truest barometer." "The youth—the Party's truest barometer—react most sharply of all against Party bureaucracy," he says in his first article. And in order that there be no doubt as to what youth he has in mind, Trotsky adds in his second letter: "Especially sharply, as we have seen, does the student youth react against bureaucracy." If we were to proceed from this proposition, an absolutely incorrect one, theoretically fallacious and practically harmful, we should have to go further and issue the slogan: "More student youth in our Party; open wide the doors of our Party to the student youth."

Hitherto the policy has been to orientate ourselves on the proletarian section of our Party, and we have said: "open wide the doors of the Party to proletarian elements; our Party must grow by recruiting proletarians." Now **Trotsky turns this formula upside down.**

The question of intellectuals and workers in our Party is no new one. It was raised as far back as the Second Congress of our Party when it was a question of the formulation of paragraph 1 of the Rules, on Party membership. As you know, Martov demanded at the time that the framework of the Party be expanded to include non-proletarian elements, in opposition to Comrade Lenin, who insisted that the admission of such elements into the Party be strictly limited. Subsequently, at the Third Congress of our Party, the issue arose again, with new force. I recall how sharply, at that congress, Comrade Lenin put the question of

workers and intellectuals in our Party. This is what Comrade Lenin said at the time:

“It has been pointed out that usually splits have been **headed by intellectuals**. This is a very important point, but it is not decisive. . . . I believe we must take a broader view of the matter. The bringing of workers on to the committees is not only a pedagogical, but also a political task. Workers have class instinct and given a little political experience they fairly soon develop into staunch Social-Democrats. I would be very much in sympathy with the idea that our committees should contain eight workers to every two intellectuals” (see Vol. VII, p. 282\*).

That is how the question stood as early as 1905. Ever since, this injunction of Comrade Lenin’s has been our guiding principle in building the Party. But now Trotsky proposes, in effect, that we break with the organisational line of Bolshevism.

And, finally, **Trotsky’s sixth error lies in his proclaiming freedom of groups**. Yes, freedom of groups! I recall that already in the sub-commission which drew up the draft resolution on democracy we had an argument with Trotsky on groups and factions. **Trotsky raised no objection to the prohibition of factions, but vehemently defended the idea of permitting groups within the Party**. That view is shared by the opposition. Evidently, these people do not realise that by permitting freedom of groups they open a loophole for the Myasnikov elements and make it easier for them to mislead the Party and represent factions as groups. Indeed, is there any difference between a group and a faction? Only an outward one. This is how Comrade Lenin defines factionalism, identifying it with groups:

“Even before the general Party discussion on the trade unions, certain signs of factionalism were apparent in the

Party, namely, the formation of groups with separate platforms, striving to a certain degree to segregate themselves and to establish a group discipline of their own" (see Stenographic Report of the Tenth Congress, R.C.P.(B.), p. 309).

As you see, there is essentially no difference here between factions and groups. And when the opposition set up its own bureau here in Moscow, with Serebryakov as its head; when it began to send out speakers with instructions to address such and such meetings and raise such and such objections; and when, in the course of the struggle, these oppositionists were compelled to retreat and changed their resolutions by command; this, of course, was evidence of the existence of a group and of **group discipline**. But we are told that this was not a faction; well, let Preobrazhensky explain what a faction is. Trotsky's pronouncements, his letters and articles on the subject of generations and of factions, are designed to induce the Party to tolerate groups within its midst. This is an attempt to legalise factions, and Trotsky's faction above all.

**Trotsky affirms that groups arise because of the bureaucratic regime** instituted by the Central Committee, and that **if there were no bureaucratic regime**, there would be no groups either. **This is an un-Marxist approach, comrades.** Groups arise, and will continue to arise, because we have in our country the most diverse forms of economy — **from embryonic forms of socialism down to medievalism**. That in the first place. Then we have the NEP, that is, **we have allowed capitalism, the revival of private capital and the revival of the ideas that go with it**, and these ideas are penetrating into the Party. That in the second place. And, in the third place, **our Party is made up of three component parts**: there are workers, peasants and intellectuals in its ranks. These then, if we approach the question in a Marxist way, **are the**

**causes why certain elements are drawn from the Party for the formation of groups**, which in some cases we must remove by surgical action, and in others dissolve by ideological means, through discussion.

It is not a question of regime here. There would be many more groups under a regime of maximum freedom. So, it is not the regime that is to blame, but the conditions in which we live, the conditions that exist in our country, the conditions governing the development of the Party itself.

If we were to allow groups in this situation, under these complex conditions, we would ruin the Party, convert it from the monolithic, united organisation that it is into a union of groups and factions contracting with one another and entering into temporary alliances and agreements. That would not be a party. It would be the collapse of the Party. Never, for a single moment, have the Bolsheviks conceived of the Party as anything but a monolithic organisation, hewed from a single block, possessing a single will and in its work uniting all shades of thought into a single current of practical activities.

But **what Trotsky suggests is profoundly erroneous**; it runs counter to Bolshevik organisational principles and would inevitably lead to the disintegration of the Party, making it lax and soft, converting it from a united party into a federation of groups. Living as we do in a situation of capitalist encirclement, we need not only a united party, not only a solid party, but a veritable party of steel, one capable of withstanding the assault of the enemies of the proletariat, capable of leading the workers to the final battle.

What are the conclusions?

The first conclusion is that we have produced a concrete, clear-cut resolution summing up the present discussion. We have

declared: groups and factions cannot be tolerated, the Party must be united, monolithic, the Party must not be put in opposition to the apparatus, there must be no idle talk of our cadres being in danger of degeneration, for they are revolutionary cadres, there must be no searching for cleavages between these revolutionary cadres and the youth, which is marching in step with these cadres and will continue to do so in future.

The opposition, headed by Trotsky, seeing that the question of shortcomings in the Party was in the air, that the C.C. had already taken the matter in hand and had formed commissions, and lest—God forbid—the initiative would remain with the C.C., tried, took as its aim, to wrest the initiative from the C.C. and get astride the hobby-horse of democracy. As you know, it is a spry sort of horse and could be used in an attempt to outride the C.C. And so there appeared the documents on which Preobrazhensky spoke here at such length—the document of the 463 and Trotsky's letter. **That same Trotsky**, who in September, a few days before his factional pronouncement, had been silent at the plenum, at any rate had not objected to the C.C. decisions, two weeks later suddenly discovered that the country and the Party were going to rack and ruin and that he, **Trotsky, this patriarch of bureaucrats, could not live without democracy.**

It was rather amusing for us to hear Trotsky hold forth on the subject of democracy, the same Trotsky who at the Tenth Party Congress had demanded that the trade unions be shaken up from above. But we knew that no great difference separates the Trotsky of the Tenth Congress period from the Trotsky of today, for now, as then, he advocates shaking up the Leninist cadres. The only difference is that at the Tenth Congress he wanted to shake up the Leninist cadres from the top, in the sphere of the trade unions, whereas now he wants to shake up the same Leninist cadres from the bottom, in the sphere of the Party. He

needs democracy as a hobby-horse, as a strategic manoeuvre. That's what all the clamour is about.

For, if the opposition really wanted to help matters, to approach the issue in a business-like and comradely way, it should have submitted its statement first of all to the commissions set up by the September plenum, and should have said something like this: "We consider your work unsatisfactory; we demand a report on its results to the Political Bureau, we demand a plenum of the C.C., to which we have new proposals of ours to present," etc. And if the commissions had refused to give them a hearing, or if the Political Bureau had refused to hear their case, if it had ignored the opinion of the opposition, or refused to call a plenum to examine Trotsky's proposals and the opposition proposals generally, then—and only then—would the opposition have been fully justified in coming out openly, over the head of the C.C., with an appeal to the Party membership and in saying to the party: "The country is facing disaster; economic crisis is developing; the Party is on the road to ruin. We asked the C.C. commissions to go into these questions, but they refused to give us a hearing, we tried to lay the matter before the Political Bureau, but nothing came of that either. We are now forced to appeal to the Party, in order that the Party itself may take things in hand." I do not doubt that the response of the Party would have been: "Yes, these are practical revolutionaries, for they place the essence of the matter above the form."

But did the opposition act like that? Did it attempt, even once, to approach the C.C. commissions with its proposals? Did it ever think of, did it make any attempt at, raising and settling the issues within the C.C. or the organs of the C.C.? No, the opposition made no such attempt. Evidently, its purpose was not to improve the inner-Party situation, or to help the Party to improve the economic situation, but to anticipate the work of the

commissions and plenum of the C.C., to wrest the initiative from the C.C., get astride the hobby-horse of democracy and, while there was still time, raise a hue and cry in an attempt to undermine confidence in the C.C. Clearly, the opposition was in a hurry to concoct “documents” against the C.C., in the shape of Trotsky’s letter and the statement of the 46, so that it could circulate them among the Sverdlov University students and to the districts and assert that it, the opposition, was for democracy and for improving the economic situation, while the C.C. was hindering, that assistance was needed against the C.C., and so on.

Such are the facts.

I demand that Preobrazhensky refute these statements of mine. I demand that he refute them, in the press at least. Let Preobrazhensky try to refute the fact that the commissions were set up in September by the C.C. plenum without the opposition, before the opposition took up the issue. Let Preobrazhensky try to refute the fact that neither Trotsky nor the other oppositionists attempted to present their proposals to the commissions. Let Preobrazhensky try to refute the fact that the opposition knew of the existence of these commissions, ignored their work and made no effort to settle the matter within the C.C.

That is why, when Preobrazhensky and Trotsky declared at the October plenum that they wanted to save the Party through democracy, but that the C.C. was blind and saw nothing, the C.C. laughed at them and replied: No, comrades, we, the C.C., are wholeheartedly for democracy, but we do not believe in your democracy, because we feel that your “democracy” is simply a strategic move against the C.C. motivated by your factionalism.

What did the C.C. and C.C.C. plenums decide at the time on inner-Party democracy? This is what they decided:

"The plenums fully endorse the Political Bureau's timely course of promoting inner-Party democracy and also its proposal to intensify the struggle against extravagance and the corrupting influence of the NEP on some elements in the Party.

"The plenums instruct the Political Bureau to do everything necessary to expedite the work of the commissions appointed by the Political Bureau and the September plenum: 1) the commission on the 'scissors,' 2) on wages, 3) on the inner-Party situation.

"When the necessary measures on these questions have been worked out, the Political Bureau must immediately begin to put them into effect and report to the next plenum of the C.C."

In one of his letters to the C.C. Trotsky wrote that the October plenum was the "supreme expression of the apparatus-bureaucratic line of policy." Is it not clear that this statement of Trotsky's is a slander against the C.C.? Only a man who has completely lost his head and is blinded by factionalism can, after the adoption of the document I have just read, maintain that the October plenum was the supreme expression of bureaucracy.

And what did the C.C. and C.C.C. plenums decide at the time on the "democratic" manoeuvres of Trotsky and the 46? This is what they decided:

"The plenums of the C.C. and C.C.C., attended also by representatives of ten Party organisations, regard Trotsky's pronouncement, made at the present highly important moment for the world revolution and the Party, as a grave political error, especially because his attack on the Political Bureau has, objectively, assumed the character of a factional move which threatens to strike a blow at Party unity and creates a crisis in the Party. The plenums note with regret that, in order to raise the questions touched on by him, Trotsky chose the method of

appealing to individual Party members, instead of the only permissible method—that of first submitting these questions for discussion by the bodies of which Trotsky is a member.

“The method chosen by Trotsky served as the signal for the appearance of a factional group (statement of the 46).

“The plenums of the C.C. and C.C.C., and representatives of ten Party organisations, resolutely condemn the statement of the 46 as a factional and schismatic step; for that is its nature, whatever the intentions of those who signed it. That statement threatens to subject the entire Party in the coming months to an inner-Party struggle and thereby weaken the Party at a supremely important moment for the destinies of the world revolution.”

As you see, comrades, these facts completely refute the picture of the situation presented here by Preobrazhensky.

Act III, or the third stage, in the history of the issue was the period following the October plenum. The October plenum had voted to instruct the Political Bureau that it take every measure to ensure harmony in its work. I must state here, comrades, that in the period following the October plenum we took every measure to work in harmony with Trotsky, although I must say that this proved anything but an easy task. We had two private conferences with Trotsky, went into all questions of economic and Party matters and arrived at certain views on which there were no disagreements. As I reported yesterday, a sub-commission of three was set up as a continuation of these private conferences and of these efforts to ensure harmony in the work of the Political Bureau. This sub-commission drew up the draft resolution which subsequently became the C.C. and C.C.C. resolution on democracy.

That is how things stood.

It seemed to us that after the unanimous adoption of the resolution there were no further grounds for controversy, no grounds for an inner-Party struggle. And, indeed, this was so until Trotsky's new pronouncement, his appeal to the districts. But Trotsky's pronouncement on the day after the publication of the C.C. resolution, undertaken independently of the C.C. and over its head, upset everything, radically changed the situation, and hurled the Party back into a fresh controversy and a fresh struggle, more acute than before. It is said that the C.C. should have forbidden the publication of Trotsky's article. That is wrong, comrades. It would have been a highly dangerous step for the C.C. to take. Try and prohibit an article of Trotsky's, already made public in the Moscow districts! The Central Committee could not take so rash a step.

That is the history of the issue.

Stalin

**From; The Results of the Thirteen Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)**

Report Delivered at the C.C., R.C.P.(B.)

Courses for Secretaries of Uyezds Committees

June 17, 1924

Questions of the Education and Re-Education of the Working Masses

One of the essential tasks confronting the Party in the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat is to re-educate the older generations and educate the new generations in the spirit of the proletarian dictatorship and socialism. The old habits and customs, traditions and prejudices inherited from the old society are most dangerous enemies of socialism. They—these traditions and habits—have a firm grip over millions of working people; at times they engulf whole strata of the proletariat; at times they present a great danger to the very existence of the proletarian dictatorship. That is why the struggle against these traditions and habits, their absolute eradication in all spheres of our activity, and, lastly, the education of the younger generations in the spirit of proletarian socialism, represent immediate tasks for our Party without the accomplishment of which socialism cannot triumph. Work to improve the state apparatus, work in the countryside, work among women toilers and among the youth—these are the principal spheres of the Party's activity in the fulfilment of these tasks.

a) **The struggle to improve the state apparatus.** The congress devoted little time to the question of the state apparatus. The report of the Central Control Commission on the fight against defects in the state apparatus was endorsed without debate. The resolution on "The Work of the Control Commissions"<sup>7</sup> was

likewise adopted without debate. This, I believe, was due to lack of time and to the great number of questions which the congress was called upon to consider. But it would be absolutely wrong to infer from this that the Party does not regard the question of the state apparatus as one of key importance. On the contrary, it is a vital issue in all our constructive work. Does the state apparatus function honestly, or does it indulge in graft; does it exercise economy in expenditure, or does it squander the national wealth; is it guilty of duplicity, or does it serve the state loyally and faithfully; is it a burden on the working people, or an organisation that helps them; does it inculcate respect for proletarian law, or does it corrupt the people's minds by disparaging proletarian law; is it progressing towards transition to a communist society in which there will be no state, or is it retrogressing towards the stagnant bureaucracy of the ordinary bourgeois state—these are all questions the correct solution of which cannot but be a matter of decisive importance for the Party and for socialism. That our state apparatus is full of defects, that it is cumbersome and expensive and nine-tenths bureaucratic, that its bureaucracy weighs heavily on the Party and its organisations, hampering their efforts to improve the state apparatus—these are things which hardly anyone will doubt. Yet it should be perfectly clear that, if our state apparatus were to rid itself of at least some of its basic faults, it could, in the hands of the proletariat, serve as a most valuable instrument for the education and re-education of broad sections of the population in the spirit of the proletarian dictatorship and socialism.

**That is why Lenin devoted special attention to improving the state apparatus.**

That is why the Party has set up special organisations of workers and peasants (the reorganised Workers' and Peasants' Inspection

and the enlarged Central Control Commission) **to combat deficiencies in our state apparatus.**

The task is to help the Central Control Commission and the Workers' and Peasants' **Inspection in their difficult work of improving, simplifying,** reducing the cost of the state apparatus and bringing a healthier atmosphere into it from top to bottom (see the congress resolution on "Work of the Control Commissions")

Stalin

**From; The Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)**

December 18-31, 1925

I should like to say a word or two about state capitalism and about state industry, the latter being of a socialist type, in order to clear up the misunderstandings and confusion that have arisen in the Party around this question.

Would it be right to call our state industry, state-capitalist industry? No. Why? Because under the dictatorship of the proletariat, state capitalism is a form of organisation of production involving two classes: an exploiting class which owns the means of production, and an exploited class which does not own the means of production. No matter what special form state capitalism may assume, it must nevertheless remain capitalist in its nature. **When Ilyich analysed state capitalism, he had in mind primarily concessions.** Let us take concessions and see whether two classes are involved in them. Yes, they are. The class of capitalists, i.e., the concessionaires, who exploit and temporarily own the means of production, and the class of proletarians, whom the concessionaire exploits. That we have no elements of socialism here is evident if only from the fact that nobody would dare turn up at a concession enterprise to start a campaign to increase productivity of labour; for everybody knows that a concession enterprise is not a socialist enterprise, but one alien to socialism.

Let us take another type of enterprise — state enterprises. Are they state-capitalist enterprises? No, they are not. Why? **Because they involve not two classes,** but one class, the working class, which through its state owns the instruments and means of production and which is not exploited; for the maximum amount of what is produced in these enterprises over and above wages is

used for the further expansion of industry, i.e., **for the improvement of the conditions of the working class as a whole.**

**It may be said** that, after all, this is not complete socialism, bearing in mind the survivals of bureaucracy persisting in the managing bodies of our enterprises. That is true, but it does not contradict the fact that state industry belongs to the socialist type of production. There are two types of production: **the capitalist, including the state-capitalist**, type, where there are two classes, where production is carried on for the profit of the capitalist; and there is the other type, the **socialist type of production, where there is no exploitation**, where the means of production belong to the working class, and where the enterprises are run not for the profit of an alien class, but for the expansion of industry in the interests of the workers as a whole. That is just what Lenin said, that our state enterprises are enterprises of a consistently socialist type.

Here an analogy with our state could be drawn. Our state, too, is not called a bourgeois state, for, according to Lenin, it is a new type of state, the proletarian type of state. Why? Because our state apparatus does not function for the purpose of oppressing the working class, as is the case with all bourgeois states without exception, but for the purpose of emancipating the working class from the oppression of the bourgeoisie. That is why our state is a proletarian type of state, although any amount of trash and survivals of the past can be found in the state apparatus. Lenin, who proclaimed our Soviet system a proletarian type of state, castigated it for its bureaucratic survivals more strongly than anybody else. Nevertheless, he asserted all the time that our state is a new proletarian type of state. A distinction must be drawn between the type of state and the heritage and survivals still persisting in the system and apparatus of the state. It is equally imperative to draw a distinction between the bureaucratic

survivals in state enterprises and the type of structure of industry that we call the socialist type. It is wrong to say that because our economic bodies, or our trusts, suffer from mistakes, **bureaucracy, and so forth, our state industry is not socialist.** It is wrong to say that. If that were true, our state, which is of the proletarian type, would also not be proletarian. I can name quite a number of bourgeois apparatuses that function better and more economically than our proletarian state apparatus; but that does not mean that our state apparatus is not proletarian, that our type of state apparatus is not superior to the bourgeois type. Why? Because, although that bourgeois apparatus functions better, it functions for the capitalist, whereas our proletarian state apparatus, even if it does fumble sometimes, after all functions for the proletariat and against the bourgeoisie.

**That fundamental difference must not be forgotten.**

The same must be said about state industry. We must not, because of the defects and survivals of bureaucracy that are to be found in the managing bodies of our state enterprises, and which will exist for some time yet, we must not, because of those survivals and defects, forget that, in their nature, our enterprises are socialist enterprises. At the Ford plants, for example, which function efficiently, there may be less thieving, nevertheless they function for the benefit of Ford, a capitalist, whereas our enterprises, where thieving takes place sometimes, and things do not always run smoothly, nevertheless function for the benefit of the proletariat.

**That fundamental difference must not be forgotten.**

Stalin

**From; Questions and Answers**

Speech Delivered at the Sverdlov University

June 9, 1925

Implanting Soviet democracy in town and country and revitalising the Soviets with a view to simplifying, cheapening, and morally improving the state apparatus, with a view to expelling elements of bureaucracy and bourgeois corruption from this apparatus, with a view to completely linking the state apparatus with the vast masses — such is the path along which the Party must proceed if it wants to strengthen the bond in the sphere of administrative and political development.

**The dictatorship of the proletariat is not an end in itself.** The dictatorship is a means, a way of achieving socialism. But **what is socialism? Socialism is the transition from a society with the dictatorship of the proletariat to a stateless society.** To effect this transition, however, preparations must be made for altering the state apparatus in such a way as to ensure in fact that the society with the dictatorship is transformed into communist society. That purpose is served by the slogan of revitalising the Soviets, the slogan of implanting Soviet democracy in town and country, the slogan of drawing the best elements of the working class and the peasantry into the direct work of governing the country. **It will be impossible** to reform the state apparatus, to alter it thoroughly, to expel elements of bureaucracy and corruption from it and to make it near and dear to the broad masses **unless the masses themselves** render the state apparatus constant and active assistance. But **on the other hand**, active and continuous assistance of the masses is impossible unless the best elements of the workers and peasants are drawn into the organs of government, **unless direct and close connection** is established

between the state apparatus and the "rank and file" of the toiling masses.

Stalin

**From; Reply to the Discussion on the Report on "The Social-Democratic Deviation in our Party"**

November 3, 1926

**Some Remarks of Lenin on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat**

Further, I said in my report that we have a more or less similar instance in connection with the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the conditions of developed imperialism. I said that as regards the dictatorship of the proletariat, understood as the smashing of the old bourgeois state apparatus and the building of a new, proletarian one, Marx in his day (the seventies of the nineteenth century) made an exception in the case of Britain, and probably also of America, where militarism and bureaucracy were little developed at that time, and where at that time there was a possibility of achieving the political rule of the proletariat by other means, "peaceful" means. I said that this exception, or reservation, made by Marx in the case of Britain and America was correct at the time, but, in Lenin's opinion, has become incorrect and superfluous in the present conditions of developed imperialism, when militarism and bureaucracy are flourishing in Britain and America in the same way as in other countries.

Permit me, comrades, to turn to Marx. Here is what he wrote in his letter to Kugelmann in April 1871:

"... If you look at the last chapter of my Eighteenth Brumaire, you will find that I say that the next attempt of the French revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to smash it . . . , and this is the preliminary condition for every real people's revolution on the continent.\* And this is what our heroic

party comrades in Paris are attempting.” (I quote from Lenin’s *The State and Revolution*, Vol. XXI, p. 394.)

That is what Marx wrote in 1871.

As we know, this passage was pounced upon by Social-Democrats of every brand, and by Kautsky in the first place, who asserted that a forcible revolution of the proletariat was not necessarily the method of advance towards socialism, that the dictatorship of the proletariat must not necessarily be understood as meaning the smashing of the old bourgeois state apparatus and the building of a new, proletarian one, and that therefore what the proletariat had to strive for was a peaceful path of transition from capitalism to socialism.

How did Comrade Lenin react to this? Here is what he wrote on this score in his book *The State and Revolution*:

“It is interesting to note, in particular, two points in the above-quoted argument of Marx. First, he confines his conclusion to the continent. This was understandable in 1871, when England was still the model of a purely capitalist country, but without militarism and, to a considerable degree, without a bureaucracy. Hence, Marx excluded England, where a revolution, even a people’s revolution, then seemed possible, and indeed was possible, without the preliminary condition of destroying the ‘ready-made state machinery.’

“Today,\* in 1917, in the epoch of the first great imperialist war, this qualification made by Marx is no longer valid.\* Both Britain and America, the biggest and the last representatives—in the whole world—of Anglo-Saxon ‘liberty’ in the sense that they had no militarism and bureaucracy, have completely sunk into the all-European filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic-military institutions which subordinate everything to themselves and trample everything underfoot. Today, in Britain and in America,

too, 'the preliminary condition for every real people's revolution.' is the smashing, the destruction of the 'ready-made state machinery' (perfected in those countries, between 1914 and 1917, up to the 'European' general imperialist standard)" (see Vol. XXI, p. 395).

As you see, we have here an instance which is more or less similar to the one I spoke of in my report in connection with Engels's old formula about the victory of socialism.

The reservation, or exception, made by Marx in the case of England and America was justified so long as there was no developed militarism and no developed bureaucracy in those countries. This reservation, in Lenin's opinion, became invalid in the new conditions of monopoly capitalism, when militarism and bureaucracy had developed in Britain and America to at least as great a degree as in the countries of the European Continent. Hence, a forcible revolution of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the proletariat, is an inevitable and indispensable condition for the advance towards socialism in all imperialist countries without exception.

Hence, when the opportunists of all countries cling to this reservation made by Marx conditionally and campaign against the dictatorship of the proletariat, it is not Marxism they are advocating, but, their own opportunist cause.

Lenin arrived at this conclusion because he knew how to distinguish between the letter and the essence of Marxism, because he regarded Marxism not as a dogma, but as a guide to action.

It would be strange to expect that Marx should have foreseen several decades in advance all the diverse potentialities of the future development of capitalism and the class struggle. But it would be stranger still to wonder at the fact that Lenin observed

and drew general conclusions about those potentialities in the new conditions of the development of capitalism, when those potentialities had appeared and developed to a more than sufficient degree.

Stalin

**From; The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.(B.)**

Speech Delivered at the Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in April 1929

**Class Changes and Our Disagreements**

What are our disagreements? What are they connected with?

They are connected, first of all, with the class changes that have been taking place recently in our country and a capitalist countries. Some comrades think that the disagreements in our Party are of an accidental nature. That is wrong, comrades. That is quite wrong. The disagreements in our Party have their roots in the class changes, in the intensification of the class struggle which has been taking place lately and which marks a turning point in development.

The chief mistake of Bukharin's group is that it fails to see these changes and this turning point; it does not see them and does not want to notice them. That, in fact, explains the failure to understand the new tasks of the Party and of the Comintern which is the characteristic feature of the Bukharin opposition.

Have you noticed, comrades, that the leaders of the Bukharin opposition, in their speeches at the plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, completely evaded the question of the class changes in our country, that they did not say a single word about the intensification of the class struggle, and did not even remotely hint at the fact that our disagreements are connected with this very intensification of the class struggle? They talked about everything, about philosophy and about theory, but they did not say a single word about the class changes which determine the orientation and the practical activity of our Party at the present moment.

How is this strange fact to be explained? Is it forgetfulness, perhaps? Of course not! Political leaders cannot forget the chief thing. The explanation is that they neither see nor understand the new revolutionary processes now going on both here, in our country, and in the capitalist countries. The explanation is that they have overlooked the chief thing, they have overlooked those class changes, which a political leader has no right to overlook. This is the real explanation for the confusion and unpreparedness displayed by the Bukharin opposition in face of the new tasks of our Party.

Recall the recent events in our Party. Recall the slogans our Party has issued lately in connection with the new class changes in our country. I refer to such slogans as the slogan of self-criticism, the slogan of intensifying the fight against bureaucracy and of purging the Soviet apparatus, the slogan of training new economic cadres and Red experts, the slogan of strengthening the collective-farm and state-farm movement, the slogan of an offensive against the kulaks, the slogan of reducing production costs and radically improving the methods of trade-union work; the slogan of purging the Party, etc. To some comrades these slogans seemed staggering and dizzying. Yet it is obvious that these slogans are the most necessary and urgent slogans of the Party at the present moment.

The whole thing began when, as a result of the Shakhty affair,<sup>2</sup> we raised in a new way the question of new economic cadres, of training Red experts from the ranks of the working class to take the place of the old experts.

What did the Shakhty affair reveal? It revealed that the bourgeoisie was still far from being crushed; that it was organising and would continue to organise wrecking activities to hamper our work of economic construction; that our economic, trade-union and, to certain extent, our Party organisations had

failed to notice the undermining operations of our class enemies, and that it was therefore necessary to exert all efforts and employ all resources to reinforce and improve our organisations, to develop and heighten their class vigilance.

In this connection the slogan of self-criticism became sharply stressed. Why? Because we cannot improve our economic, trade-union and Party organisations, we cannot advance the cause of building socialism and of curbing the wrecking activities of the bourgeoisie, unless we develop criticism and self-criticism to the utmost, unless we place the work of our organisations under the control of the masses. It is indeed a fact that wrecking has been and is going on not only in the coal-fields, but also in the metallurgical industries, in the war industries, in the People's Commissariat of Transport, in the gold and platinum industries, etc., etc. Hence the slogan of self-criticism.

Further, in connection with the grain-procurement difficulties, in connection with the opposition of the kulaks to the Soviet price policy, we stressed the question of developing collective farms and state farms to the utmost, of launching an offensive against the kulaks, of organising grain procurements by means of pressure on the kulak and well-to-do elements.

What did the grain-procurement difficulties reveal? They revealed that the kulak was not asleep, that the kulak was growing, that he was busy undermining the policy of the Soviet government, while our Party, Soviet and co-operative organisations—at all events, some of them—either failed to see the enemy, or adapted themselves to him instead of fighting him.

Hence the new stress laid on the slogan of self-criticism, on the slogan of checking and improving our Party, co-operative and procurement organisations generally.

Further, in connection with the new tasks of reconstructing industry and agriculture on the basis of socialism, there arose the slogan of systematically reducing production costs, of strengthening labour discipline, of developing socialist emulation, etc. These tasks called for a revision of the entire activities of the trade unions and Soviet apparatus, for radical measures to put new life into these organisations and for purging them of bureaucratic elements.

Hence the stress laid on the slogan of fighting bureaucracy in the trade unions and in the Soviet apparatus.

Finally, the slogan of purging the Party. It would be ridiculous to think that it is possible to strengthen our Soviet-economic, trade-union and co-operative organisations, that it is possible to purge them of the dross of bureaucracy, without giving a sharp edge to the Party itself. There can be no doubt that bureaucratic elements exist not only in the economic and cooperative, trade-union and Soviet organisations, but in the organisations of the Party itself. Since the party is the guiding force of all these organisations, it is obvious that purging the Party is the essential condition for thoroughly revitalising and improving all the other organisations of the working class. Hence the slogan of purging the Party.

Are these slogans a matter of accident? No, they are not. You see yourselves that they are not accidental. They are necessary links in the single continuous chain which is called the offensive of socialism against the elements of capitalism.

They are connected, primarily, with the period of the reconstruction of our industry and agriculture on the basis of socialism. And what is the reconstruction of the national economy on the basis of socialism? It is the offensive of socialism against the capitalist elements of the national economy along the

whole front. It is a most important advance of the working class of our country towards the complete building of socialism. But in order to carry out this reconstruction we must first of all improve and strengthen the cadres of socialist construction—the economic-Soviet and trade-union cadres, and also Party and co-operative cadres; we must give a sharp edge to all our organisations, purge them of dross; we must stimulate the activity of the vast masses of the working class and peasantry.

Further, these slogans are connected with the fact of the resistance of the capitalist elements of the national economy to the offensive of socialism. The so-called Shakhty affair cannot be regarded as something accidental. “Shakhtyists” are at present entrenched in every branch of our industry. Many of them have been caught, but by no means all of them. **The wrecking activities of the bourgeois intelligentsia are one of the most dangerous forms of resistance to developing socialism.** The wrecking activities are all the more dangerous because they are connected with international capital. Bourgeois wrecking is undoubtedly an indication of the fact that the capitalist elements have by no means laid down their arms, that they are gathering strength for fresh attacks on the Soviet regime.

As for the capitalist elements in the countryside, there is still less reason to regard as accidental the opposition of the kulaks to the Soviet price policy, which has been going on for over a year already. Many people are still unable to understand why it is that until 1927 the kulak gave his grain of his own accord, whereas since 1927 he has ceased to do so. But there is nothing surprising in it. Formerly the kulak was still relatively weak; he was unable to organise his farming properly; he lacked sufficient capital to improve his farm and so he was obliged to bring all, or nearly all, his surplus grain to the market. Now, however, after a number of good harvests, since he has been able to build up his farm,

since he has succeeded in accumulating the necessary capital, he is in a position to manoeuvre on the market, he is able to set aside grain, this currency of currencies, as a reserve for himself, and prefers to bring to the market meat, oats, barley and other secondary crops. It would be ridiculous now to hope that the kulak can be made to part with his grain voluntarily.

There you have the root of the resistance which the kulak is now offering to the policy of the Soviet regime.

And **what does the resistance offered by the capitalist elements of town and country to the socialist offensive represent?** It represents a regrouping of the forces of the class enemies of the proletariat for the purpose of defending the old against the new. It is not difficult to understand that these circumstances cannot but lead to an intensification of the class struggle. But **if we are to break the resistance of the class enemies and clear the way for the advance of socialism**, we must, besides everything else, give a sharp edge to all our organisations, **purge them of bureaucracy**, improve their cadres and mobilise the vast masses of the working class and labouring strata of the countryside against the capitalist elements of town and country.

It was on the basis of these class changes that our Party's present slogans arose.

The same must be said about the class changes in capitalist countries. It would be ridiculous to think that the stabilisation of capitalism has remained unchanged. Still more ridiculous would it be to assert that the stabilisation is gaining in strength, that it is becoming secure. As a matter of fact, capitalist stabilisation is being undermined and shaken month by month and day by day. The intensification of the struggle for foreign markets and raw materials, the growth of armaments, the growing antagonism between America and Britain, the growth of socialism in the

U.S.S.R., the swing to the left of the working class in the capitalist countries, the wave of strikes and class conflicts in the European countries, the growing revolutionary movement in the colonies, including India, the growth of communism in all countries of the world—all these are facts which indicate beyond a doubt that the elements of a new revolutionary upsurge are accumulating in the capitalist countries.

Hence the task of intensifying the fight against Social-Democracy, and, above all, against its “Left” wing, as being the social buttress of capitalism.

Hence the task of intensifying the fight in the Communist Parties against the Right elements, as being the agents of Social-Democratic influence.

Hence the task of intensifying the fight against conciliation towards the Right deviation, as being the refuge of opportunism in the Communist Parties.

Hence the slogan of purging the Communist Parties of Social-Democratic traditions.

Hence the so-called new tactics of communism in the trade unions.

Some comrades do not understand the significance and importance of these slogans. But a Marxist will always understand that, unless these slogans are put into effect, the preparation of the proletarian masses for new class battles is unthinkable, victory over Social-Democracy is unthinkable, and the selection of real leaders of the communist movement, capable of leading the working class into the fight against capitalism, is impossible.

Such, comrades, are the class changes in our country and in the capitalist countries, on the basis of which the present slogans of

our Party both in its internal policy and in relation to the Comintern, have arisen.

Our Party sees these class changes. It understands the significance of the new tasks and it mobilises forces for their fulfilment. That is why it is facing events fully armed. That is why it does not fear the difficulties confronting it, for it is prepared to overcome them.

**The misfortune of Bukharin's group is that it does not see these class changes and does not understand the new tasks of the Party.** And it is precisely because it does not understand them that it is in a state of complete bewilderment, is ready to flee from difficulties, to retreat in the face of the difficulties, to surrender the positions.

Have you ever seen fishermen when a storm is brewing on a big river—such as the Yenisei? I have seen them many a time. In the face of a storm one group of fishermen will muster all their forces, encourage their fellows and boldly guide the boat to meet the storm: “Cheer up, lads, keep a tight hold of the tiller, cut the waves, we’ll win through!”

But there is another type of fishermen—those who, on sensing a storm, lose heart, begin to snivel and demoralise their own ranks: “It’s terrible, a storm is brewing: lie down, lads, in the bottom of the boat, shut your eyes, let’s hope she’ll make the shore somehow.” (General laughter.)

Does it still need proof that the line and conduct of Bukharin’s group exactly resembles the line and conduct of the second group of fishermen, who retreat in panic in the face of difficulties?

We say that in Europe the conditions are maturing for a new revolutionary upsurge, that this circumstance dictates to us new

tasks along the line of intensifying the fight against the Right deviation in the Communist Parties and of driving the Right deviators out of the Party, of intensifying the fight against conciliation, which screens the Right deviation; of intensifying the fight against Social-Democratic traditions in the Communist Parties, etc., etc. But Bukharin answers us that all this is nonsense, that no such new tasks confront us, that the whole fact of the matter is that the majority in the Central Committee wants to “haul” him, i.e., Bukharin, “over the coals.”

**We say that the class changes in our country dictate to us new tasks** which call for a systematic reduction of costs of production and improvement of labour discipline in industry; that these tasks cannot be carried out without radical change in the methods of work of the trade unions. But Tomsky answers us that all this is nonsense, that no such new tasks confront us, that the whole fact of the matter is that the majority in the Central Committee wants to “haul” him, i.e., Tomsky, “over the coals.”

We say that the **reconstruction of the national economy** dictates to us new tasks along the line of intensifying **the fight against bureaucracy** in the Soviet and economic apparatus, of purging this apparatus of rotten and alien elements, of wreckers, etc., etc. But Rykov answers us that all this is nonsense, that no such new tasks confront us, that the whole fact of the matter is that the majority in the Central Committee wants to “haul” him, i.e., Rykov, “over the coals.”

Now, is this not ridiculous, comrades? Is it not obvious that Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky see nothing but their own navels?

The misfortune of Bukharin’s group is that it does not see the new class changes and does not understand the new tasks of the Party. And it is precisely because it does not understand them

that it is compelled to drag in the wake of events and to yield to difficulties.

There you have the root of our disagreements.

Stalin

### **The Opposition Bloc in the C.P.S.U.(B.)**

Theses for the Fifteenth All-Union Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

Adopted by the Conference and Endorsed by the C.C.,  
C.P.S.U.(B.)

October 26, 1926

**The characteristic feature of the present period** is the intensification of the struggle between the capitalist countries and our country, on the one hand, and **between the socialist elements and the capitalist elements within our country, on the other.**

While the attempts of world capital to encircle our country economically, to isolate it politically, to establish a masked blockade, and, lastly, to exact outright vengeance for the help given by the workers of the U.S.S.R. to the workers engaged in struggle in the West and to the oppressed peoples in the East, are creating difficulties of an external order, the fact that our country has passed from the period of restoration to a period of the reconstruction of industry on a new technical basis, and the consequent intensification of the struggle between the capitalist and socialist elements in our economy, are creating difficulties of an internal order.

The Party is aware of these difficulties and is in a position to overcome them. It is already overcoming them with the aid of the vast masses of the proletariat and is confidently leading the country along the road to socialism. But not all sections of our Party believe in the possibility of further progress. There are sections in our Party—numerically small, it is true—which, being scared by the difficulties, are a prey to weariness and wavering, fall into despair and cultivate a spirit of pessimism, are infected

by disbelief in the creative powers of the proletariat, and are coming to have a capitulatory mentality.

In this sense, **the present period of radical change is to some extent reminiscent of the period of radical change** of October 1917. Just as then, in October 1917, the complicated situation and the difficulties of the transition from a bourgeois to a proletarian revolution engendered in one section of the Party vacillation, defeatism and disbelief in the possibility of the proletariat taking power and retaining it (Kamenev, Zinoviev), so now, in the present period of radical change, the difficulties of the transition to the new phase of socialist construction are engendering in certain circles of our Party vacillation, disbelief in the possibility of the socialist elements in our country being victorious over the capitalist elements, disbelief in the possibility of victoriously building socialism in the U.S.S.R.

The opposition bloc is an expression of this spirit of pessimism and defeatism in the ranks of one section of our Party.

The Party is aware of the difficulties and is in a position to overcome them. But to fight these difficulties successfully requires, above all, that the pessimistic spirit and defeatist mentality in the ranks of one section of the Party shall be overcome.

In its statement of October 16, 1926, the opposition bloc renounces factionalism and dissociates itself from openly Menshevik groups inside and outside the C.P.S.U.(B.); but at the same time it declares that in principle it maintains its former stand, that it does not renounce its errors in matters of principle, and that it will defend these erroneous views within the limits permitted by the Party Rules.

It follows from this that the opposition bloc intends to go on cultivating a spirit of pessimism and capitulation in the Party, intends to go on propagating its erroneous views in the Party.

Hence, the immediate task of the Party is to expose the untenability in principle of the basic views of the opposition bloc, to make it clear that they are incompatible with the principles of Leninism, and to wage a determined ideological struggle against the opposition bloc's errors in matters of principle with a view to overcoming them completely.

## I

### THE PASSING OVER OF THE "NEW OPPOSITION" TO TROTSKYISM

#### ON THE BASIC QUESTION OF THE CHARACTER AND PROSPECTS OF OUR REVOLUTION

The Party holds that our revolution is a socialist revolution, that the October Revolution is not merely a signal, an impulse, a point of departure for the socialist revolution in the West, but that at the same time it is, firstly, a base for the further development of the world revolutionary movement, and, secondly, it ushers in a period of transition from capitalism to socialism in the U.S.S.R. (dictatorship of the proletariat), during which the proletariat, if it pursues a correct policy towards the peasantry, can and will successfully build a complete socialist society, provided, of course, the power of the international revolutionary movement, on the one hand, and the power of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R., on the other, are great enough to protect the U.S.S.R. from armed imperialist intervention.

Trotskyism holds an entirely different view of the character and prospects of our revolution. In spite of the fact that in October 1917 the Trotskyists marched together with the Party, they held,

and still hold, that in itself, and by its very nature, our revolution is not a socialist one; that the October Revolution is merely a signal, an impulse, a point of departure for the socialist revolution in the West; that if the world revolution is delayed and a victorious socialist revolution in the West does not come about in the very near future, proletarian power in Russia is bound to fall or to degenerate (which is one and the same thing) under the impact of inevitable clashes between the proletariat and the peasantry.

Whereas the Party, in organising the October Revolution, held that "the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately," and that "the victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organised socialist production," can and should stand up "against the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states" (Lenin, Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33) the Trotskyists, on the other hand, although they co-operated with the Bolsheviks in the October period, held that "it would be hopeless to think . . . that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe" (Trotsky, Vol. 111, Part 1, p. 90, Peace Programme, first published in August 1917).

Whereas our Party holds that the Soviet Union possesses "all that is necessary and sufficient" "for the building of a complete socialist society" (Lenin, On Co-operation), the Trotskyists, on the contrary, hold that "real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the major European countries" (Trotsky, Vol. III, Part 1, p. 93, "Postscript" to Peace Programme, written in 1922).

Whereas our Party holds that “ten or twenty years of correct relations with the peasantry, and victory on a world scale is assured” (Lenin, plan of the pamphlet *The Tax in Kind*), 2 the Trotskyists, on the contrary, hold that the proletariat cannot have correct relations with the peasantry until the victory of the world revolution; that, having taken power, the proletariat “would come into hostile collision not only with all the bourgeois groupings which supported the proletariat during the first stages of its revolutionary struggle, but also with the broad masses of the peasantry with whose assistance it came into power,” and that “the contradictions in the position of a workers’ government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population can be solved only on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution” (Trotsky, in the “Preface,” written in 1922, to his book *The Year 1905*).

The conference notes that these views of Trotsky and his followers on the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution are totally at variance with the views of our Party, with Leninism.

The conference considers that these views—minimising the historical role and the importance of our revolution as a base for the further development of the world revolutionary movement, and tending to weaken the determination of the Soviet proletariat to go on building socialism, and therefore to hinder the unleashing of the forces of international revolution—thereby run counter to the principles of genuine internationalism and to the fundamental line of the Communist International.

The conference considers that these views of Trotsky and his followers directly approximate to the views of Social-Democracy, as represented by its present leader, Otto Bauer, who asserts that “in Russia, where the proletariat is only a small minority of the nation, it can maintain its rule only temporarily,”

that "it must inevitably lose it again as soon as the peasant masses of the nation are culturally mature enough to take power into their own hands," that "the temporary rule of industrial socialism in agrarian Russia is only a beacon summoning the proletariat of the industrial West to battle," and that "only with the conquest of political power by the proletariat of the industrial West can the rule of industrial socialism be durably established" in Russia (see O. Bauer, *Bolshevism or Social-Democracy?*, in German).

The conference therefore qualifies these views of Trotsky and his followers as a Social-Democratic deviation in our Party on the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution.

The principal fact in the development of inner-Party relations in the C.P.S.U.(B.) since the Fourteenth Congress (which condemned the basic views of the "New Opposition") is that the "New Opposition" (Zinoviev, Kamenev), which formerly contended against Trotskyism, against the Social-Democratic deviation in our Party, has now gone over to the ideological standpoint of Trotskyism, that it has wholly and completely surrendered to Trotskyism the positions, common to the Party, to which it formerly adhered, and is now coming out with as much ardour for Trotskyism, as it formerly came out against it.

The "New Opposition's" passing over to Trotskyism was determined by two main circumstances:

a) the weariness, vacillation, and spirit of pessimism and defeatism, alien to the proletariat, among the adherents of the "New Opposition" in face of the new difficulties of the present period of radical change; furthermore, Kamenev's and Zinoviev's present vacillation and defeatism arose not by accident, but as a repetition, a recurrence of the vacillation and

pessimism which they displayed nine years ago, in October 1917, in face of the difficulties of that period of radical change;

b) the complete defeat of the “New Opposition” at the Fourteenth Congress, and the resulting endeavour to unite at all costs with the Trotskyists, in order, by combining the two groups—the Trotskyists and the “New Opposition”—to compensate for the weakness of these groups and their isolation from the proletarian masses, all the more because the ideological views of Trotskyism fully harmonised with the present spirit of pessimism of the “New Opposition.”

To this, too, must be attributed the fact that the opposition bloc has become a rallying centre for all the miscellaneous bankrupt trends inside and outside the C.P.S.U.(B.) which have been condemned by the Party and the Comintern—from the “Democratic Centralists”<sup>3</sup> and the “Workers’ Opposition” in the C.P.S.U.(B.) to the “ultra-Left” opportunists in Germany and the Liquidators of the Souvarine variety<sup>4</sup> in France.

Hence the unscrupulousness in choice of means and unprincipledness in policy which form the basis of the bloc of the Trotskyists and the “New Opposition,” and without which they could not have brought together these diverse anti-Party trends.

Thus, the Trotskyists, on the one hand, and the “New Opposition,” on the other, quite naturally joined forces on the common platform of a Social-Democratic deviation and an unprincipled union of diverse anti-Party elements in the fight against the Party, thereby forming an opposition bloc which represents something like a recurrence—in a new form—of the August Bloc (1912-14).

## II

### THE PRACTICAL PLATFORM OF THE OPPOSITION BLOC

The practical platform of the opposition bloc is a direct sequel to the basic error of this bloc on the character and prospects of our revolution.

The major features of the opposition bloc's practical platform may be summed up in the following principal points:

a) Questions of the international movement. The Party holds that the advanced capitalist countries are, on the whole, in a state of partial, temporary stabilisation; that the present period is an inter-revolutionary one, making it incumbent on the Communist Parties to prepare the proletariat for the coming revolution; that the offensive launched by capital in a vain effort to consolidate the stabilisation cannot but evoke an answering struggle on the part of the working class and the uniting of its forces against capital; that the Communist Parties must intervene in this intensifying class struggle and turn the attacks of capital into counter-attacks of the proletariat, with a view to establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat; that in order to achieve these aims the Communist Parties must win over the vast masses of the working class which still adhere to the reformist trade unions and the Second International; that, consequently, united front tactics are necessary and obligatory for the Communist Parties.

The opposition bloc starts out from entirely different premises. Having no faith in the internal forces of our revolution, and falling into despair owing to the delay of the world revolution, the opposition bloc slips away from the basis of a Marxist analysis of the class forces of the revolution to one consisting of "ultra-Left" self-deception and "revolutionary" adventurism; it denies the existence of a partial stabilisation of capitalism and, consequently, inclines towards putschism.

Hence the opposition's demand for a revision of the united front tactics and the break-up of the Anglo-Russian Committee, its

failure to understand the role of the trade unions and its call to replace the latter by new, "revolutionary" proletarian organisations of its own invention.

Hence the opposition bloc's support of the "ultra-Left" ranters and opportunists in the Communist International (in the German Party, for example).

The conference considers that the policy of the opposition bloc in the international sphere is not in conformity with the interests of the international revolutionary movement.

b) The proletariat and the peasantry in the U.S.S.R. The Party holds that "the supreme principle of the dictatorship is the maintenance of the alliance of the proletariat and peasantry in order that the proletariat may retain its leading role and state power" (Lenin, Vol. XXVI, p. 460); that the proletariat can and should be the leader of the main mass of the peasantry in the economic sphere, in the sphere of socialist construction, just as in October 1917 it was the leader of the peasantry in the political sphere, in overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat; that industrialisation of the country can be carried out only if it is based upon a steady improvement of the material conditions of the majority of the peasantry (the poor and middle peasants), who constitute the principal market for our industry, and that, therefore, our economic policy (price policy, tax policy, etc.) must be such as strengthens the bond between industry and peasant economy and maintains the alliance between the working class and the main mass of the peasantry.

The opposition bloc starts out from entirely different premises. Abandoning the fundamental line of Leninism in the peasant question, not believing that the proletariat can be the leader of the peasantry in the work of socialist construction, and regarding

the peasantry in the main as a hostile environment, the opposition bloc proposes economic and financial measures capable only of disrupting the bond between town and country, of shattering the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, and thus undermining all possibility of real industrialisation. Such, for example, are: a) the opposition's proposal to raise the wholesale prices of manufactured goods, which would be bound to lead to an increase of retail prices, to the impoverishment of the poor peasants and a considerable section of the middle peasants, to a contraction of the home market, to discord between the proletariat and the peasantry, to a fall in the exchange rate of the chervonets and, in the final analysis, to a decline in real wages; b) the opposition's proposal that the peasantry should be taxed to the maximum, which would be bound to result in a rift in the alliance between the workers and the peasants.

The conference considers that the policy of the opposition bloc towards the peasantry is not in conformity with the interests of the country's industrialisation and of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

c) A fight against the Party apparatus under the guise of fighting bureaucracy in the Party. The Party takes as its starting point that the Party apparatus and the mass of the Party members constitute an integral whole, that the Party apparatus (Central Committee, Central Control Commission, Oblast Party committees, gubernia committees, okrug committees, uyezds committees, bureaus of Party units, etc.) embodies the leading element of the Party as a whole, that the Party apparatus comprises the finest members of the proletariat, who may be and should be criticised for errors, who may be and should be "freshened up," but who cannot be vilified without the risk of disrupting the Party and leaving it defenceless.

The opposition bloc, on the other hand, starts out by counterposing the mass of the Party members to the Party apparatus, tries to minimise the leading role of the Party apparatus, reducing its functions to registration and propaganda, incites the mass of the Party members against the Party apparatus, and thus discredits the latter, weakening its position in regard to leading the state.

The conference considers that this policy of the opposition bloc, a policy which has nothing in common with Leninism, can only result in the Party being disarmed in its fight against bureaucracy in the state apparatus, for a real transformation of this apparatus, and hence for strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat.

d) A fight against the "regime" in the Party under the guise of fighting for inner-Party democracy. The Party takes as its starting point that "whoever weakens in the least the iron discipline of the Party of the proletariat (especially during the time of its dictatorship), actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat" (Lenin, Vol. XXV, p. 190); that inner-Party democracy is necessary not in order to weaken and shatter proletarian discipline in the Party, but in order to strengthen and consolidate it, and that without iron discipline in the Party, without a firm regime in the Party, backed by the sympathy and support of the vast masses of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible.

The opposition bloc, on the other hand, starts out by counterposing inner-Party democracy to Party discipline, confuses freedom of groups and factions with inner-Party democracy, and tries to make use of such democracy to shatter Party discipline and undermine the unity of the Party. It is natural that the opposition bloc's call for a fight against the "regime" in the Party, which leads in practice to advocacy of freedom of groups and factions in the Party, should be a call that

is taken up with fervour by the anti-proletarian elements in our country as a means of salvation from the regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The conference considers that the fight of the opposition bloc against the “regime” in the Party, a fight which has nothing in common with the organisational principles of Leninism, can only result in undermining the unity of the Party, weakening the dictatorship of the proletariat and **unleashing the anti-proletarian forces in the country that are striving to undermine and shatter the dictatorship.**

One of the means chosen by the opposition bloc for disrupting Party discipline and aggravating the struggle within the Party is the method of an all-Union discussion, such as it tried to force upon the Party in October of this year. While considering it necessary that questions of disagreement should be freely discussed in the theoretical journals of our Party, and while recognising the right of every Party member freely to criticise shortcomings in our Party work, the conference at the same time calls attention to the words of Lenin, who said that our Party is not a debating society but the fighting organisation of the proletariat. The conference considers that an all-Union discussion may be recognised as necessary only on condition: a) that such necessity is recognised by at least several local Party organisations of a gubernia or oblast level; b) that there is not a sufficiently firm majority in the Central Committee on major questions of Party policy; c) that, although there may be a firm majority holding a definite opinion in the C.C., the latter nevertheless considers it necessary to test the correctness of its policy through a general Party discussion. Moreover, in all such cases an all-Union discussion may be begun and carried through only after a decision of the C.C. to that effect.

The conference notes that not one of these conditions existed when the opposition bloc demanded the opening of an all-Union discussion.

The conference therefore considers that the Central Committee of the Party acted quite rightly in deciding that a discussion was inexpedient and in condemning the opposition bloc for its attempt to force upon the Party an all-Union discussion on issues which had already been decided by the Party.

Summing up its analysis of the practical platform of the opposition bloc, the conference finds that this platform marks the opposition bloc's departure from the class line of the proletarian revolution on cardinal issues of international and home policy.

### III

#### THE "REVOLUTIONARY" WORDS AND OPPORTUNIST DEEDS OF THE OPPOSITION BLOC

It is a characteristic feature of the opposition bloc that, being in, fact the expression of a Social-Democratic deviation in our Party, and advocating what is in fact an opportunist policy, it tries, nevertheless, to clothe its pronouncements in revolutionary phraseology, to criticise the Party "from the Left" and to disguise itself in a "Left" garb. The reason for this is that the communist proletarians, to whom the opposition bloc is chiefly trying to appeal, are the most revolutionary proletarians in the world, and that, having been brought up in the spirit of revolutionary traditions, they would simply not listen to critics who are avowed Rights; and so, in order to palm off its opportunist wares, the opposition bloc is compelled to clap a revolutionary label on them, being well aware that only by such a ruse can it attract the attention of the revolutionary proletarians.

But since, nevertheless, the **opposition bloc is the vehicle of a Social-Democratic deviation**, since in fact it advocates an opportunist policy, its words and its deeds must inevitably conflict. Hence the inherently contradictory nature of the activities of the opposition bloc. Hence the divergence between its words and its deeds, between its revolutionary phrases and its opportunist actions.

The opposition noisily criticises the Party and the Comintern “from the Left,” and at the same time it calls for a revision of the united front tactics, the breakup of the Anglo-Russian Committee, withdrawal from the trade unions and their replacement by new, “revolutionary” organisations, thinking that all this will advance the revolution, whereas in fact the result would be to aid Thomas and Oudegeest, sever the Communist Parties from the trade unions, weaken the position of world communism and, consequently, retard the revolutionary movement. In words—“revolutionaries,” but in deeds—abettors of the Thomases and Oudegeests.

The opposition with much clamour “dresses down” the Party “from the Left,” and at the same time it demands the raising of wholesale prices of manufactured goods, thinking thereby to accelerate industrialisation, whereas in fact the result would be to disorganise the home market, shatter the bond between industry and peasant economy, cause a fall in the exchange rate of the chervonets and in real wages, and, consequently, wreck all possibility of industrialisation. In words—industrialisers, but in deeds—abettors of the opponents of industrialisation.

The opposition accuses the Party of being unwilling to fight against bureaucracy in the state apparatus, and at the same time it proposes that wholesale prices should be raised, evidently thinking that raising wholesale prices has no bearing on the question of bureaucracy in the state apparatus, whereas in fact it

turns out that the result must be completely to bureaucratisé the state economic apparatus, since high wholesale prices are the surest means for causing industry to wilt, for converting it into a hothouse plant and for bureaucratising the economic apparatus. In words—opponents of bureaucracy, but in deeds—advocates and promoters of bureaucratising the state apparatus.

The opposition raises a hue and cry against private capital, and at the same time it proposes that state capital should be withdrawn from the sphere of circulation, for the benefit of industry, thinking thereby to undermine private capital, whereas in fact the result would be to strengthen private capital in every way, since the withdrawal of state capital from circulation, which is private capital's principal sphere of operation, cannot fail to put trade completely under the control of private capital. In words—a fight against private capital, but in deeds—aid for private capital.

The opposition raises a cry about degeneration of the Party apparatus, but in fact it turns out that when the Central Committee raises the question of the expulsion of one of the Communists who have really degenerated, Mr. Ossovsky, the opposition displays maximum loyalty to this gentleman and votes against his expulsion. **In words—opponents of degeneration, but in deeds—abettors and defenders of degeneration.**

The opposition raised a cry about inner-Party democracy, and at the same time it demanded an all-Union discussion, thinking thereby to put inner-Party democracy into effect, whereas in fact it turned out that, by forcing a discussion upon the overwhelming majority of the Party on behalf of a tiny minority, the opposition was guilty of an act of gross violation of all democracy. In words—for inner-Party democracy, but in

deeds—the violation of the fundamental principles of all democracy.

**In the present period of acute class struggle, there can be only one of two possible policies in the working-class movement:** either the policy of Menshevism, or the policy of Leninism. The attempts of the opposition bloc to occupy a middle position between these two opposite lines, under cover of “Left,” “revolutionary” phraseology and while intensifying criticism of the C.P.S.U.(B.), were bound to lead, and have actually led, to the opposition bloc slithering into the camp of the opponents of Leninism, into the camp of Menshevism.

The enemies of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and of the Comintern know just what value is to be attached to the “revolutionary” phraseology of the opposition bloc. Paying no attention to it, therefore, as being of no significance, they unanimously praise the opposition bloc for its unrevolutionary deeds and take up the opposition’s slogan of a fight against the main line of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and the Comintern as their own slogan. It cannot be considered accidental that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Cadets, the Russian Mensheviks and the German “Left” Social-Democrats have all found it possible to express openly their sympathy with the fight of the opposition bloc against our Party, since they calculate that this fight will lead to a split, and that a split will unleash the anti-proletarian forces in our country, to the glee of the enemies of the revolution.

The conference considers that the Party must pay special attention to tearing off the “revolutionary” mask from the opposition bloc and showing up the Tatter’s opportunist nature.

The conference considers that the Party must protect the unity of its ranks like the apple of its eye, considering that the unity of our

Party is the chief antidote to all counter-revolutionary attempts on the part of the enemies of the revolution.

#### IV

#### CONCLUSIONS

Summing up the stage of the inner-Party struggle that has been passed through, the Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) notes that in this struggle the Party has shown its immense ideological growth, it has unhesitatingly rejected the basic views of the opposition and has scored a swift and decisive victory over the opposition bloc, compelling the latter publicly to renounce factionalism and to dissociate itself from the openly opportunist groups inside and outside the C.P.S.U.(B.).

The conference notes that the attempts of the opposition bloc to force a discussion upon the Party and undermine its unity have resulted in the Party masses rallying still more solidly around the Central Committee, thus isolating the opposition and ensuring real unity in the ranks of our Party.

The conference considers that only with the active support of the broad mass of the Party members was the Central Committee able to achieve these successes, that the activity and political understanding displayed by the Party masses in the struggle against the disruptive work of the opposition bloc are the best proofs that the Party is functioning and developing on the basis of genuine inner-Party democracy.

Fully approving the policy of the Central Committee in its struggle to ensure unity, the conference considers that the next tasks of the Party should be:

- 1) To see to it that the minimum conditions arrived at as necessary for the unity of the Party shall be actually observed.

2) To wage a determined ideological struggle against the Social-Democratic deviation in our Party, explaining to the masses the erroneousness of the basic views of the opposition bloc and bringing to light the opportunist content of these views, whatever **the “revolutionary” phrases under which they are disguised.**

3) To work to ensure that the opposition bloc acknowledges the erroneousness of its views.

4) To safeguard the unity of the Party in every way, checking all attempts to revive factionalism and to violate discipline.

Stalin

**From; The Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)**

December 2-19, 1927

The Party' s task is to continue along the line of isolating the new bourgeoisie and to strengthen the bond between the working class and the working Soviet intelligentsia in town and country.

d) The state apparatus and the struggle against bureaucracy. So much is being said about bureaucracy that there is no need to dilate on it. That **elements of bureaucracy exist in our state, co-operative and Party apparatus, there can be no doubt. That it is necessary to combat the elements of bureaucracy, and that this task will confront us all the time, as long as we have state power, as long as the state exists, is also a fact.**

But one must know how far one can go. To carry the struggle against bureaucracy in the state apparatus to the point of destroying the state apparatus, of discrediting the state apparatus, of attempts to break it up— that means going against Leninism, means forgetting that our apparatus is a Soviet apparatus, which is a state apparatus of a higher type than any other state apparatus in the world.

Wherein lies the strength of our state apparatus? In that it links the state power with the millions of workers and peasants through the Soviets. In that the Soviets are schools of administration for tens and hundreds of thousands of workers and peasants. In that the state apparatus does not fence itself off from the vast masses of the people, but merges with them through an incalculable number of mass organisations, all sorts of commissions, committees, conferences, delegate meetings, etc., which encompass the Soviets and, in this way, buttress the organs of government.

Wherein lies the weakness of our state apparatus? **In the existence within it of elements of bureaucracy, which spoil and distort its work.** In order to eliminate bureaucracy from it—and this cannot be done in one or two years—we must systematically improve the state apparatus, bring it closer to the masses, reinvigorate it by bringing in new people loyal to the cause of the working class, remodel it in the spirit of communism, but not break it up or discredit it. Lenin was a thousand times right when he said: "Without an 'apparatus' we would have perished long ago. If we do not wage a systematic and stubborn struggle to improve the apparatus we shall perish before we have created the base for socialism."

I shall not dilate on those defects in our state apparatus that are glaring enough as it is. I have in mind, primarily, "Mother Red Tape." I have at hand a heap of materials on the matter of red tape, exposing the criminal negligence of a number of judicial, administrative, insurance, co-operative and other organisations. (..)

It appears, that in addition to workers who are promoted, there are also such as are "demoted," who are pushed into the background by their own comrades, not because they are incapable or inefficient, but because they are conscientious and honest in their work.

Here is a worker, a tool-maker, who was promoted to a managerial post at his plant because he was a capable and incorruptible man. He worked for a couple of years, worked honestly, introduced order, put a stop to inefficiency and waste. But, working in this way, he trod on the toes of a gang of so-called "Communists," he disturbed their peace and quiet. And what happened? This gang of "Communists" put a spoke in his wheel and thus compelled him to "demote himself," as much as

to say: "You wanted to be smarter than us, you won't let us live and make a bit in quiet—so take a back seat, brother."

Here is another worker, also a tool-maker, an adjuster of bolt-cutting machines, who was promoted to a managerial post at his factory. He worked zealously and honestly. But, working in this way, he disturbed somebody's peace and quiet. And what happened? A pretext was found and they got rid of this "troublesome" comrade. How did this promoted comrade leave, what were his feelings? Like this: "In whatever post I was appointed to I tried to justify the confidence that was placed in me. But this promotion played a dirty trick on me and I shall never forget it. They threw mud at me. My wish to bring everything into the light of day remained a mere wish. Neither the works committee, nor the management, nor the Party unit would listen to me. I am finished with promotion, I would not take another managerial post even if offered my weight in gold" (Trud, 14 No. 128, June 9, 1927).

But this is a disgrace to us, comrades! How can such outrageous things be tolerated?

The Party's task is, in fighting against bureaucracy and for the improvement of the state apparatus, to extirpate with a red-hot iron such outrageous things in our practical work as those I have just spoken about.

e) Concerning Lenin's slogan about the cultural revolution. The surest remedy for bureaucracy is raising the cultural level of the workers and peasants. One can curse and denounce bureaucracy in the state apparatus, one can stigmatise and pillory bureaucracy in our practical work, **but unless the masses of the workers reach a certain level of culture**, which will create the possibility, the desire, **the ability to control the state apparatus from below**, by the masses of the workers themselves,

**bureaucracy will continue to exist in spite of everything.** Therefore, the cultural development of the working class and of the masses of the working peasantry, not only the development of literacy, although literacy is the basis of all culture, but primarily the cultivation of the ability to take part in the administration of the country, is the chief lever for improving the state and every other apparatus. **This is the sense and significance of Lenin's slogan about the cultural revolution.**

Here is what Lenin said about this in March 1922, before the opening of the Eleventh Congress of our Party, in his letter to the Central Committee addressed to Comrade Molotov:

"The chief thing we lack is culture, ability to administer. . . . Economically and politically NEP fully ensures us the possibility of laying the foundation of socialist economy. It is 'only' a matter of the cultural forces of the proletariat and of its vanguard." 15

These words of Lenin's must not be forgotten, comrades. (Voices : "Quite right!")

Hence the Party's task: to exert greater efforts to raise the cultural level of the working class and of the working strata of the peasantry.

A second shortcoming. It consists in introducing administrative methods in the Party, in replacing the method of persuasion, which is of decisive importance for the Party, by the method of administration. This shortcoming is a danger no less serious than the first one. Why? Because it creates the danger of our Party organisations, which are independently acting organisations, being converted into mere bureaucratic institutions. If we take into account that we have not less than 60,000 of the most active officials distributed among all sorts of economic, co-operative and state institutions, where they are fighting bureaucracy, it must be admitted that some of them, while fighting bureaucracy

in those institutions, sometimes become infected with bureaucracy themselves and carry that infection into the Party organisation. And this is not our fault, comrades, but our misfortune, for that process will continue to a greater or lesser degree as long as the state exists. And precisely because that process has some roots in life, we must arm ourselves for the struggle against this shortcoming, we must raise the activity of the mass of the Party membership, draw them into the decision of questions concerning our Party leadership, systematically implant inner-Party democracy and prevent the method of persuasion in our Party practice being replaced by the method of administration.

Stalin

**From; Speech Delivered at the Eighth Congress of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League**

May 16, 1928

Comrades, it is the accepted thing at congresses to speak of achievements. That we have achievements is beyond question. They, these achievements, are, of course, not inconsiderable, and there is no reason to hide them. But, comrades, it has become a practice with us lately to talk so much of achievements, and sometimes so affectedly, that one loses all desire to speak of them once again. Allow me, therefore, to depart from the general practice and to say a few words not about our achievements, but about our weaknesses and **our tasks in connection with these weaknesses.**

I am referring, comrades, to the tasks involved by the questions of our internal work of construction.

These tasks relate to three questions: that of the line of our political work, that of stimulating the activity of the broad mass of the people in general and of the working class in particular, and of stimulating the struggle against bureaucracy, and, lastly, that of training new personnel for our work of economic construction.

(..)

Organise Mass Criticism from Below

The second question concerns **the task of combating bureaucracy**, of organising mass criticism of our shortcomings, of organising mass control from below.

**Bureaucracy is one of the worst enemies of our progress.** It exists in all our organisations—Party, Y.C.L., trade-union and

economic. When people talk of bureaucrats, they usually point to the old non-Party officials, who as a rule are depicted in our cartoons as men wearing spectacles. (Laughter.) That is not quite true, comrades. **If it were only a question of the old bureaucrats, the fight against bureaucracy would be very easy.** The trouble is that it is not a matter of the old bureaucrats. It is a matter of the new bureaucrats, bureaucrats who sympathise with the Soviet Government, and finally, communist bureaucrats. **The communist bureaucrat is the most dangerous type of bureaucrat.** Why? Because he masks his bureaucracy with the title of Party member. And, unfortunately, we have quite a number of such communist bureaucrats.

Take our Party organisations. You have no doubt read about the Smolensk affair, the Artyomovsk affair and so on. What do you think, were they matters of chance? What is the explanation of these shameful instances of corruption and moral deterioration in certain of our Party organisations? The fact that Party monopoly was carried to absurd lengths, that the voice of the rank and file was stifled, that inner-Party democracy was abolished, and bureaucracy became rife. How is this evil to be combated? I think that there is not and cannot be any other way of combating this evil than by organising control from below by the Party masses, by implanting inner-Party democracy. What objection can there be to rousing the fury of the mass of the Party membership against these corrupt elements and giving it the opportunity to send such elements packing? There can hardly be any objection to that.

Or take the Young Communist League, for instance. You will not deny, of course, that here and there in the Young Communist League there are utterly corrupt elements against whom it is absolutely essential to wage a ruthless struggle. But let us leave aside the corrupt elements. Let us take the latest fact of an

unprincipled struggle waged by groups within the Young Communist League around personalities, a struggle which is poisoning the atmosphere in the Young Communist League. Why is it that you can find as many "Kosarevites" and "Sobolevites" as you like in the Young Communist League, while Marxists have to be looked for with a candle? (Applause.) What does this indicate, if not that a process of bureaucratic petrification is taking place in certain sections of the Y.C.L. top leadership?

And the trade unions? Who will deny that in the trade unions there is bureaucracy in plenty? We have production conferences in the factories. We have temporary control commissions in the trade unions. It is the task of these organisations to rouse the masses, to bring our shortcomings to light and to indicate ways and means of improving our constructive work. Why are these organisations not developing? Why are they not seething with activity? Is it not obvious that it is bureaucracy in the trade unions, coupled with bureaucracy in the Party organisations, that is preventing these highly important organisations of the working class from developing?

Lastly, our economic organisations. Who will deny that our economic bodies suffer from bureaucracy? Take the Shakhty affair as an illustration. Does not the Shakhty affair indicate that our economic bodies are not speeding ahead, but crawling, dragging their feet?

How are we to put an end to bureaucracy in all these organisations?

There is only one sole way of doing this, and that is to organise control from below, to organise criticism of the bureaucracy in our institutions, of their shortcomings and their mistakes, by the vast masses of the working class.

I know that by rousing the fury of the masses of the working people against the bureaucratic distortions in our organisations, we sometimes have to tread on the toes of some of our comrades who have past services to their credit, but who are now suffering from the disease of bureaucracy. But ought this to stop our work of organising control from below? I think that it ought not and must not. For their past services we should take off our hats to them, but for their present blunders and bureaucracy it would be quite in order to give them a good drubbing. (Laughter and applause.) How else? Why not do this if the interests of the work demand it?

There is talk of criticism from above, criticism by the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, by the Central Committee of our Party and so on. That, of course, is all very good. But it is still far from enough. More, it is by no means the chief thing now. The chief thing now is to start a broad tide of criticism from below against bureaucracy in general, against shortcomings in our work in particular. Only by organising twofold pressure —from above and from below—and only by shifting the principal stress to criticism from below, can we count on waging a successful struggle against bureaucracy and on rooting it out.

It would be a mistake to think that only the leaders possess experience in constructive work. That is not true, comrades. The vast masses of the workers who are engaged in building our industry are day by day accumulating vast experience in construction, experience which is not a whit less valuable to us than the experience of the leaders. Mass criticism from below, control from below, is needed by us in order that, among other things, this experience of the vast masses should not be wasted, but be reckoned with and translated into practice.

From this follows the immediate task of the Party: to wage a ruthless struggle against bureaucracy, to organise mass criticism

from below, and to take this criticism into account when adopting practical decisions for eliminating our shortcomings.

It cannot be said that the Young Communist League, and especially Komsomolskaya Pravda, have not appreciated the importance of this task. The shortcoming here is that often the fulfilment of this task is not carried out completely. And in order to carry it out completely, it is necessary to give heed not only to criticism, but also to the results of criticism, to the improvements that are introduced as a result of criticism.

Stalin

## **Against Vulgarizing the Slogan of Self-Criticism**

June 26, 1928

The slogan of self-criticism must not be regarded as something temporary and transient. Self-criticism is a specific method, a Bolshevik method, of training the forces of the Party and of the working class generally in the spirit of revolutionary development. Marx himself spoke of self-criticism as a method of strengthening the proletarian revolution. 1 As to self-criticism in our Party, its beginnings date back to the first appearance of Bolshevism in our country, to its very inception as a specific revolutionary trend in the working-class movement.

We know that as early as the spring of 1904, when Bolshevism was not yet an independent political party but worked together with the Mensheviks within a single Social-Democratic party—we know that Lenin was already calling upon the Party to undertake "self-criticism and ruthless exposure of its own shortcomings." Here is what Lenin wrote in his pamphlet *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*:

"They (i.e., the opponents of the Marxists—J. St.) gloat and grimace over our controversies; and, of course, they will try to pick isolated passages from my pamphlet, which deals with the defects and shortcomings of our Party, and to use them for their own ends. The Russian Social-Democrats are already steeled enough in battle not to be perturbed by these pin-pricks and to continue, in spite of them, their work of self-criticism and ruthless exposure of their own shortcomings,\* which will unquestionably and inevitably be overcome as the working-class movement grows. As for those gentlemen, our opponents, let them try to give us a picture of the true state of affairs in their

own 'parties' even remotely approximating that given by the minutes of our Second Congress!" (Vol. VI, p. 161. 2 )

Therefore, those comrades are absolutely wrong who think that self-criticism is a passing phenomenon, a fashion which is bound speedily to go out of existence as every fashion usually does. Actually, self-criticism is an indispensable and permanent weapon in the arsenal of Bolshevism, one that is intimately linked with the very nature of Bolshevism, with its revolutionary spirit.

It is sometimes said that self-criticism is something that is good for a party which has not yet come to power and has "nothing to lose," but that it is dangerous and harmful to a party which has already come to power, which is surrounded by hostile forces, and against which an exposure of its weaknesses may be exploited by its enemies.

That is not true. It is quite untrue! On the contrary, just because Bolshevism has come to power, just because Bolsheviks may become conceited owing to the successes of our work of construction, just because Bolsheviks may fail to observe their weaknesses and thus make things easier for their enemies—for these very reasons self-criticism is particularly needed now, after the assumption of power.

The purpose of self-criticism being to disclose and eliminate our errors and weaknesses, is it not clear that in the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat it can only facilitate Bolshevism's fight against the enemies of the working class? Lenin took into account these specific features of the situation which had arisen after the Bolsheviks had seized power when, in April-May 1920, he wrote in his pamphlet "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder:

"The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how serious the party is and how it in practice fulfils its obligations towards its class and the toiling masses. Frankly admitting a mistake,\* ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the circumstances which gave rise to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious party; that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the class, and then the masses" (Vol. XXV, p. 200).

Lenin was a thousand times right when he said at the Eleventh Party Congress in March 1922:

"The proletariat is not afraid to admit that this or that thing has succeeded splendidly in its revolution, and this or that has not succeeded. All revolutionary parties which have hitherto perished, did so because they grew conceited, failed to see where their strength lay, and feared to speak of their weaknesses.\* But we shall not perish, for we do not fear to speak of our weaknesses and shall learn to overcome them" (Vol. XXVII, pp. 260-61).

There is only one conclusion: that without self-criticism there can be no proper education of the Party, the class, and the masses; and that without proper education of the Party, the class, and the masses, there can be no Bolshevism.

Why has the slogan of self-criticism acquired special importance just now, at this particular moment of history, in 1928?

Because the growing acuteness of class relations, both in the internal and external spheres, is more glaringly evident now than it was a year or two ago.

Because the subversive activities of the class enemies of the Soviet Government, who are utilising our weaknesses, our

errors, against the working class of our country, are more glaringly evident now than they were a year or two ago.

Because we cannot and must not allow the lessons of the Shakhty affair and the "procurement manoeuvres" of the capitalist elements in the countryside, coupled with our mistakes in planning, to go unheeded.

If we want to strengthen the revolution and meet our enemies fully prepared, we must rid ourselves as quickly as possible of our errors and weaknesses, as disclosed by the Shakhty affair and the grain procurement difficulties.

If we do not want to be caught unawares by all sorts of "surprises" and "accidents," to the joy of the enemies of the working class, we must disclose as quickly as possible those weaknesses and errors of ours which have not yet been disclosed, but which undoubtedly exist.

If we are tardy in this, we shall be facilitating the work of our enemies and aggravating our weaknesses and errors. But all this will be impossible if self-criticism is not developed and stimulated, if the vast masses of the working class and peasantry are not drawn into the work of bringing to light and eliminating our weaknesses and errors.

The April plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. was therefore quite right when it said in its resolution on the Shakhty affair:

"The chief condition for the successful accomplishment of all the indicated measures is the effective implementation of the slogan of self-criticism issued by the Fifteenth Congress."\* 3

But in order to develop self-criticism, we must first overcome a number of obstacles standing in the way of the Party. These include the cultural backwardness of the masses, the inadequate cultural forces of the proletarian vanguard, our conservatism,

our "communist vainglory," and so on. But one of the most serious obstacles, if not the most serious of all, is the bureaucracy of our apparatus. I am referring to the bureaucratic elements to be found in our Party, government, trade-union, co-operative and all other organisations. I am referring to the bureaucratic elements who batten on our weaknesses and errors, who fear like the plague all criticism by the masses, all control by the masses, and who hinder us in developing self-criticism and ridding ourselves of our weaknesses and errors. Bureaucracy in our organisations must not be regarded merely as routine and red-tape. Bureaucracy is a manifestation of bourgeois influence on our organisations. Lenin was right when he said:

". . . We must realise that the fight against bureaucracy is an absolutely essential one, and that it is just as complicated as the fight against the petty-bourgeois elemental forces. Bureaucracy in our state system has become a malady of such gravity that it is spoken of in our Party programme, and that is because it is connected with these petty-bourgeois elemental forces and their wide dispersion"\* (Vol. XXVI, p. 220).

With all the more persistence, therefore, must the struggle against bureaucracy in our organisations be waged, if we really want to develop self-criticism and rid ourselves of the maladies in our constructive work.

With all the more persistence must we rouse the vast masses of the workers and peasants to the task of criticism from below, of control from below, as the principal antidote to bureaucracy.

Lenin was right when he said:

"If we want to combat bureaucracy, we must enlist the cooperation of the rank and file" . . . for "what other way is there of putting an end to bureaucracy than by enlisting the co-

operation of the workers and peasants!"\* (Vol. XXV, pp. 496 and 495.)

But in order to "enlist the co-operation" of the vast masses, we must develop proletarian democracy in all the mass organisations of the working class, and primarily within the Party itself. Failing this, self-criticism will be nothing, an empty thing, a mere word.

It is not just any kind of self-criticism that we need. We need such self-criticism as will raise the cultural level of the working class, enhance its fighting spirit, fortify its faith in victory, augment its strength and help it to become the real master of the country.

Some say that, once there is self-criticism, we do not need labour discipline, we can stop working and give ourselves over to prattling a little about everything. That would be not self-criticism but an insult to the working class. Self-criticism is needed not in order to shatter labour discipline, but to strengthen it, in order that labour discipline may become conscious discipline, capable of withstanding petty-bourgeois slackness.

Others say that, once there is self-criticism, we no longer need leadership, we can abandon the helm and let things "take their natural course." That would be not self-criticism but a disgrace. Self-criticism is needed not in order to relax leadership, but to strengthen it, in order to convert it from leadership on paper and of little authority into vigorous and really authoritative leadership.

But there is another kind of "self-criticism," one that tends to destroy the Party spirit, to discredit the Soviet regime, to weaken our work of construction, to corrupt our economic cadres, to disarm the working class, and to foster talk of degeneration. It was just this kind of "self-criticism" that the Trotsky opposition was urging upon us only recently. It goes without saying that the

Party has nothing in common with such "self-criticism." It goes without saying that the Party will combat such "self-criticism" with might and main.

A strict distinction must be drawn between this "self-criticism," which is alien to us, destructive and anti-Bolshevik, and our, Bolshevik self-criticism, the object of which is to promote the Party spirit, to consolidate the Soviet regime, to improve our constructive work, to strengthen our economic cadres, to arm the working class.

Our campaign for intensifying self-criticism began only a few months ago. We have not yet the necessary data for a review of the first results of the campaign. But it may already be said that the campaign is beginning to yield beneficial fruits.

It cannot be denied that the tide of self-criticism is beginning to mount and spread, extending to ever larger sections of the working class and drawing them into the work of socialist construction. This is borne out if only by such facts as the revival of the production conferences and the temporary control commissions.

True, there are still attempts to pigeon-hole well-founded and verified recommendations of the production conferences and temporary control commissions. Such attempts must be fought with the utmost determination, for their purpose is to discourage the workers from self-criticism. But there is scarcely reason to doubt that such bureaucratic attempts will be swept away completely by the mounting tide of self-criticism.

Nor can it be denied that, as a result of self-criticism, our business executives are beginning to smarten up, to become more vigilant, to approach questions of economic leadership more seriously, while our Party, Soviet, trade-union and all other personnel are

becoming more sensitive and responsive to the requirements of the masses.

True, it cannot be said that inner-Party democracy and working-class democracy generally are already fully established in the mass organisations of the working class. But there is no reason to doubt that further advances will be made in this field as the campaign unfolds.

Nor can it be denied that, as a result of self-criticism, our press has become livelier and more vigorous, while such detachments of our press workers as the organisations of worker and village correspondents are already becoming a weighty political force.

True, our press still continues at times to skate on the surface; it has not yet learned to pass from individual critical remarks to deeper criticism, and from deep criticism to drawing general conclusions from the results of criticism and making plain what achievements have been attained in our constructive work as a result of criticism. But it can scarcely be doubted that advances will be made in this field as the campaign goes on.

However, along with these good aspects of our campaign, it is necessary to note some bad aspects. I am referring to those distortions of the slogan of self-criticism which are already occurring at the beginning of the campaign and which, if they are not resisted at once, may give rise to the danger of self-criticism being vulgarised.

1) It must be observed, in the first place, that a number of press periodicals are betraying a tendency to transplant the campaign from the field of businesslike criticisms of shortcomings in our socialist construction to the field of ostentatious outcries against excesses in private life. This may seem incredible. But, unfortunately, it is a fact.

Take the newspaper *Vlast Truda*, for example, organ of the Irkutsk Okrug Party Committee and Okrug Soviet Executive Committee (No. 128). There you will find a whole page peppered all over with ostentatious "slogans," such as: "Sexual Promiscuity—a Bourgeois Vice"; "One Glass Leads to Another"; "Own Cottage Calls for Own Cow"; "Double-Bed Bandits"; "A Shot That Misfired," and so on and so forth. What, one asks, can there be in common between these "critical" shrieks, which are worthy of Birzhovka, 4 and Bolshevik self-criticism, the purpose of which is to improve our socialist construction? It is very possible that the author of these ostentatious items is a Communist. It is possible that he is burning with hatred of the "class enemies" of the Soviet regime. But that he is straying from the right path, that he is vulgarising the slogan of self-criticism, and that his voice is the voice not of our class, of that there cannot be any doubt.

2) It must be observed, further, that even those organs of the press which, generally speaking, are not devoid of the ability to criticise correctly, that even they are sometimes inclined to criticise for criticism's sake, turning criticism into a sport, into sensation-mongering. Take *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, for example. Everyone knows the services rendered by *Komsomolskaya Pravda* in stimulating self-criticism. But take the last issues of this paper and look at its "criticism" of the leaders of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions—a whole series of impermissible caricatures on the subject. Who, one asks, needs "criticism" of this kind, and what effect can it have except to discredit the slogan of self-criticism? What is the use of such "criticism," looked at, of course, from the standpoint of the interests of our socialist construction and not of cheap sensation-mongering designed to give the philistine something to chuckle over? Of course, all forms of arms are required for self-criticism,

including the "light cavalry." But does this mean that the light cavalry must be turned into light-minded cavalry?

3) It must be observed, lastly, that there is a definite tendency on the part of a number of our organisations to turn self-criticism into a witch-hunt against our business executives, into an attempt to discredit them in the eyes of the working class. It is a fact that certain local organisations in the Ukraine and Central Russia have started a regular witch-hunt against some of our best business executives, whose only fault is that they are not 100 per cent immune from error. How else are we to understand the decisions of the local organisations to remove these executives from their posts, decisions which have no binding force whatever and which are obviously designed to discredit them? How else are we to understand the fact that these executives are criticised, but are given no opportunity to answer the criticism? When did we begin to pass off a "Shemyaka court" <sup>5</sup> as self-criticism?

Of course, we cannot demand that criticism should be 100 per cent correct. If the criticism comes from below, we must not ignore it even if it is only 5 or 10 per cent correct. All that is true. But does this mean that we must demand that business executives should be 100 per cent immune from error? Is there any one in creation who is immune from error 100 per cent? Is it so hard to understand that it takes years and years to train our economic cadres and that our attitude towards them must be one of the utmost consideration and solicitude? Is it so hard to understand that we need self-criticism not for the sake of a witch-hunt against our economic cadres, but in order to improve and perfect them?

Criticise the shortcomings of our constructive work, but do not vulgarise the slogan of self-criticism and do not turn it into a medium for ostentatious exercises on such themes as "Double-Bed Bandits," "A Shot That Misfired," and so on.

Criticise the shortcomings in our constructive work, but do not discredit the slogan of self-criticism and do not turn it into a means of cooking up cheap sensations.

Criticise the shortcomings in our constructive work, but do not pervert the slogan of self-criticism and do not turn it into a weapon for witch-hunts against our business or any other executives.

And the chief thing: do not substitute for mass criticism from below "critical" fireworks from above; let the working-class masses come into it and display their creative initiative in correcting our shortcomings and in improving our constructive work.

Signed: J. Stalin

Pravda, No. 146, June 26, 1928

Stalin

**Letter to the Members of the Party Affairs Study Circle at the Communist Academy**

June 8, 1928

Today I received Slepkov's theses on self-criticism. It appears that they were discussed in your circle. I have been told by members of the circle that these theses were circulated as a document that is intended not to criticise the line of the Central Committee, but to substantiate it.

It would be wrong to deny that Party members have the right to criticise the line of the Central Committee. More, I am ready to grant that members of your study circle even have the right to put forward among themselves their own separate theses opposing the C.C.'s position. Slepkov's theses, however, evidently do not aim at criticising the C.C.'s line, or putting forward anything new in opposition to it, but at explaining and substantiating the position of the C.C. It is this, presumably, that explains why Slepkov's theses received certain currency in Moscow Party circles.

Nevertheless, or, rather, for that very reason, I consider it my duty to declare that Slepkov's theses

a) do not coincide with the C.C.'s position on the slogan of self-criticism, and that

b) they "correct," "supplement" and, naturally, worsen it, to the advantage of the bureaucratic elements in our institutions and organisations.

1) Incorrect, in the first place, is the line of Slepkov's theses. Slepkov's theses only superficially resemble theses on the slogan of self-criticism. Actually, they are theses on the dangers of the

slogan of self-criticism. There is no denying that every revolutionary slogan harbours certain possibilities of being distorted in practical use. Such possibilities also apply, of course, to the slogan of self-criticism. But to make these possibilities the central issue, the basis of theses on self-criticism, is to turn things upside down, to undermine the revolutionary significance of self-criticism, to assist the bureaucrats who are trying to evade self-criticism owing to the "dangers" connected with it. I have no doubt that it will not be without a feeling of satisfaction that the bureaucratic elements in our Party and Soviet organisations will read Slepko's theses.

Has such a line anything in common with the C.C.'s line on self-criticism, with the resolution of the April plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. on the Shakhty affair, or with the C.C.'s June appeal on the subject of self-criticism? 1

I think not.

2) Incorrect, too, is the inner substance of Slepko's theses. One of the most serious factors making self-criticism unavoidable, and at the same time one of the most important objects of self-criticism, is the bureaucracy of our organisations.

Can we make any progress if we do not combat the bureaucracy of our Party and Soviet apparatus?

No, we cannot!

Can we organise control by the masses, stimulate the initiative and independent activity of the masses, draw the vast masses into the work of socialist construction, if we do not wage a determined struggle against bureaucracy in our organisations?

No, we cannot!

Can we sap, weaken, discredit bureaucracy without giving effect to the slogan of self-criticism? No, we cannot!

Is it possible, in theses dealing with the slogan of self-criticism, to evade discussing bureaucracy as a factor detrimental to our socialist construction and as one of the most important objects of self-criticism?

Obviously, we cannot.

How, then, is it to be explained that Slepkov contrived in his theses to say nothing about this burning question? How is it possible, in theses on self-criticism that are intended to substantiate the position of the C.C., to forget the most important task of self-criticism—that of combating bureaucracy? Yet it is a fact that in Slepkov's theses there is not a single word (literally not a single word!) about the bureaucracy of our organisations, about the bureaucratic elements in these organisations, about the bureaucratic perversions in the work of our Party and Soviet apparatus.

Can this more than frivolous attitude towards the highly important question of combating bureaucracy be reconciled with the C.C.'s position on the question of self-criticism, with such Party documents as the resolution of the April plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. on the Shakhty affair or the C.C.'s June appeal on self-criticism?

I think not.

With communist greetings,

J. Stalin

June 8, 1928

Komsomolskaya Pravda, No. 90, April 19, 1929

Stalin

### **The Right Danger in the C.P.S.U.(B.)**

Speech Delivered at the Plenum of the Moscow Committee and Moscow Control Commission of the C.P.S.U.(B.)

October 19, 1928

I think, comrades, that we must first rid our minds of trivialities, of personal matters, and so forth, in order to settle the question which interests us, that of the Right deviation.

Is there a Right, opportunist danger in our Party? Do there exist objective conditions favourable to the development of such a danger? How should this danger be fought? These are the questions that now confront us.

But we shall not settle this question of the Right deviation unless we purge it of all the trivialities and adventitious elements which have surrounded it and which prevent us from understanding its essence.

Zapolsky is wrong in thinking that the question of the Right deviation is an accidental one. He asserts that it is all not a matter of a Right deviation, but of petty squabbles, personal intrigues, etc. Let us assume for a moment that petty squabbles and personal intrigues do play some part here, as in all struggles. But to explain everything by petty squabbles and to fail to see the essence of the question behind the squabbles, is to depart from the correct, Marxist path.

A large, united organisation of long standing, such as the Moscow organisation undoubtedly is, could not be stirred up from top to bottom and set into motion by the efforts of a few squabblers or intriguers. No, comrades, such miracles do not happen. That is apart from the fact that the strength and power

of the Moscow organisation cannot be estimated so lightly. Obviously, more profound causes have been at work here causes which have nothing to do with either petty squabbles or intrigues.

Fruntov is also wrong; for although he admits the existence of a Right danger, he does not think it worth while for serious, busy people to concern themselves with it seriously. In his opinion, the question of the Right deviation is a subject for noise-makers, not for serious people. I quite understand Fruntov: he is so absorbed in the day-to-day practical work that he has no time to think about the prospects of our development. But that does not mean that we must convert the narrow, practical empiricism of certain of our Party workers into a dogma of our work of construction. A healthy practicalism is a good thing; but if it loses sight of the prospects in the work and fails to subordinate the work to the basic line of the Party, it becomes a drawback. And yet it should not be difficult to understand that the question of the Right deviation is a question of the basic line of our Party; it is the question as to whether the prospects of development outlined by our Party at the Fifteenth Congress are correct or incorrect.

Those comrades who in discussing the problem of the Right deviation concentrate on the question of the individuals representing the Right deviation are also wrong. Show us who are the Rights and the conciliators, they say, name them, so that we can deal with them accordingly. That is not the correct way of presenting the question. Individuals, of course, play some part. Nevertheless, the question is not one of individuals, but of the conditions, of the situation, giving rise to the Right danger in the Party. Individuals can be kept out, but that does not mean that we have thereby cut the roots of the Right danger in our Party. Hence, the question of individuals does not settle the matter, although it is undoubtedly of interest.

In this connection I cannot help recalling an incident which occurred in Odessa at the end of 1919 and the beginning of 1920, when our forces, having driven Denikin's forces out of the Ukraine, were crushing the last remnants of his armies in the area of Odessa. One group of Red Army men searched high and low for the "Entente" in Odessa, convinced that if they could only capture it—the Entente—the war would be over. (General laughter.) It is conceivable that our Red Army men might have captured some representatives of the Entente in Odessa, but that, of course, would not have settled the question of the Entente, for the roots of the Entente did not lie in Odessa, although Odessa at that time was the Denikinites' last terrain, but in world capitalism.

The same can be said of certain of our comrades, who in the question of the Right deviation concentrate on the individuals representing that deviation, and forget about the conditions that give rise to it.

That is why we must first of all elucidate here the conditions that give rise to the Right, and also to the "Left" (Trotskyite), deviation from the Leninist line.

Under capitalist conditions the Right deviation in communism signifies a tendency, an inclination that has not yet taken shape, it is true, and is perhaps not yet consciously realised, but nevertheless a tendency of a section of the Communists to depart from the revolutionary line of Marxism in the direction of Social-Democracy. When certain groups of Communists deny the expediency of the slogan "Class against class" in election campaigns (France), or are opposed to the Communist Party nominating its own candidates (Britain), or are disinclined to make a sharp issue of the fight against "Left" Social-Democracy (Germany), etc., etc., it means that there are people in the

Communist Parties who are striving to adapt communism to Social-Democratism.

A victory of the Right deviation in the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries would mean the ideological rout of the Communist Parties and an enormous strengthening of Social-Democratism. And what does an enormous strengthening of Social-Democratism mean? It means the strengthening and consolidation of capitalism, for Social-Democracy is the main support of capitalism in the working class.

Consequently, a victory of the Right deviation in the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries would lead to a development of the conditions necessary for the preservation of capitalism.

Under the conditions of Soviet development, when capitalism has already been overthrown, but its roots have not yet been torn out, the Right deviation in communism signifies a tendency, an inclination that has not yet taken shape, it is true, and is perhaps not yet consciously realised, but nevertheless a tendency of a section of the Communists to depart from the general line of our Party in the direction of bourgeois ideology. When certain circles of our Communists strive to drag the Party back from the decisions of the Fifteenth Congress, by denying the need for an offensive against the capitalist elements in the countryside; or demand a contraction of our industry, in the belief that its present rapid rate of development is fatal for the country; or deny the expediency of subsidies to the collective farms and state farms, in the belief that such subsidies are money thrown to the winds; or deny the expediency of fighting against bureaucracy by methods of self-criticism, in the belief that self-criticism undermines our apparatus; or demand that the monopoly of foreign trade be relaxed, etc., etc., it means that there are people in the ranks of our Party who are striving, perhaps without

themselves realising it, to adapt our socialist construction to the tastes and requirements of the "Soviet" bourgeoisie.

A victory of the Right deviation in our Party would mean an enormous strengthening of the capitalist elements in our country. And what does the strengthening of the capitalist elements in our country mean? It means weakening the proletarian dictatorship and increasing the chances of the restoration of capitalism.

Consequently, a victory of the Right deviation in our Party would mean a development of the conditions necessary for the restoration of capitalism in our country.

Have we in our Soviet country any of the conditions that would make the restoration of capitalism possible? Yes, we have. That, comrades, may appear strange, but it is a fact. We have overthrown capitalism, we have established the dictatorship of the proletariat, we are developing our socialist industry at a rapid pace and are linking peasant economy with it. But we have not yet torn out the roots of capitalism. Where are these roots imbedded? They are imbedded in commodity production, in small production in the towns and, especially, the countryside.

As Lenin says, the strength of capitalism lies "in the strength of small production. For, unfortunately, small production is still very, very widespread in the world, and small production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale" (see Vol. XXV, p. 173).

It is clear that, since small production bears a mass, and even a predominant character in our country, and since it engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously and on a mass scale, particularly under the conditions of NEP, we have in our country conditions which make the restoration of capitalism possible.

Have we in our Soviet country the necessary means and forces to abolish, to eliminate the possibility of the restoration of capitalism? Yes, we have. And it is this fact that proves the correctness of Lenin's thesis on the possibility of building a complete socialist society in the U.S.S.R. For this purpose it is necessary to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat strengthen the alliance between the working class and peasantry, develop our key positions from the standpoint of industrialising the country, develop industry at a rapid rate, electrify the country, place the whole of our national economy on a new technical basis, organise the peasantry into co-operatives on a mass scale and increase the yield of its farms gradually unite the individual peasant farms into socially conducted, collective farms, develop state farms, restrict and overcome the capitalist elements in town and country, etc., etc. Here is what Lenin says on this subject:

"As long as we live in a small-peasant country, there is a surer economic basis for capitalism in Russia than for communism. This must be borne in mind. Anyone who has carefully observed life in the countryside, as compared with life in the towns, knows that we have not torn out the roots of capitalism and have not undermined the foundation, the basis of the internal enemy. The latter depends on small-scale production, and there is only one way of undermining it, namely, to place the economy of the country, including agriculture, on a new technical basis, the technical basis of modern large-scale production. And it is only electricity that is such a basis. Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country. Otherwise, the country will remain a small-peasant country, and we have got to understand that clearly. We are weaker than capitalism, not only on a world scale, but also within the country. Everybody knows this. We are conscious of it, and we shall see to it that our economic base is transformed from a small-peasant base into a

large-scale industrial base. Only when the country has been electrified, only when our industry, our agriculture, our transport system have been placed upon the technical basis of modern large-scale industry shall we achieve final victory" (Vol. XXVI, pp. 46-47).

It follows, firstly, that as long as we live in a small-peasant country, as long as we have not torn out the roots of capitalism, there is a surer economic basis for capitalism than for communism. It may happen that you cut down a tree but fail to tear out the roots; your strength does not suffice for this. Hence the possibility of the restoration of capitalism in our country.

Secondly, it follows that besides the possibility of the restoration of capitalism there is also the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country, because we can destroy the possibility of the restoration of capitalism, we can tear out the roots of capitalism and achieve final victory over capitalism in our country, if we intensify the work of electrifying the country, if we place our industry, agriculture and transport on the technical basis of modern, large-scale industry. Hence the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country.

Lastly, it follows that we cannot build socialism in industry alone and leave agriculture to the mercy of spontaneous development on the assumption that the countryside will "move by itself" following the lead of the towns. The existence of socialist industry in the towns is the principal factor in the socialist transformation of the countryside. But it does not mean that that factor is quite sufficient. If the socialist towns are to take the lead of the peasant countryside all the way, it is essential, as Lenin says, "to place the economy of the country, including agriculture,\* on a new technical basis, the technical basis of modern large-scale production."

Does this quotation from Lenin contradict another of his statements, to the effect that "NEP fully ensures us the possibility \* of laying the foundation of a socialist economy"? No, it does not. On the contrary, the two statements fully coincide. Lenin by no means says that NEP gives us socialism ready-made. Lenin merely says that NEP ensures us the possibility of laying the foundation of a socialist economy. There is a great difference between the possibility of building socialism and the actual building of socialism. Possibility and actuality must not be confused. It is precisely for the purpose of transforming possibility into actuality that Lenin proposes the electrification of the country and the placing of industry, agriculture and transport on the technical basis of modern large-scale production as a condition for the final victory of socialism in our country.

But this condition for the building of socialism cannot be fulfilled in one or two years. It is impossible in one or two years to industrialise the country, build up a powerful industry, organise the vast masses of the peasantry into co-operatives, place agriculture on a new technical basis, unite the individual peasant farms into large collective farms, develop state farms, and restrict and overcome the capitalist elements in town and country. Years and years of intense constructive work by the proletarian dictatorship will be needed for this. And until that is accomplished—and it can not be accomplished all at once—we shall remain a small peasant country, where small production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously and on a mass scale, and where the danger of the restoration of capitalism remains.

And since our proletariat does not live in a vacuum, but in the midst of the most actual and real life with all its variety of forms, the bourgeois elements arising on the basis of small production "encircle the proletariat on every side with petty bourgeois

elemental forces, by means of which they permeate and corrupt the proletariat and continually cause relapses among the proletariat into petty-bourgeois spinelessness, disunity, individualism, and alternate moods of exaltation and dejection" (Lenin, Vol. XXV, p. 189), thereby introducing into the ranks of the proletariat and of its Party a certain amount of vacillation, a certain amount of wavering.

There you have the root and the basis of all sorts of vacillations and deviations from the Leninist line in the ranks of our Party.

That is why the Right and "Left" deviations in our Party cannot be regarded as a trifling matter.

Where does the danger of the Right, frankly opportunist, deviation in our Party lie? In the fact that it underestimates the strength of our enemies, the strength of capitalism: it does not see the danger of the restoration of capitalism; it does not understand the mechanism of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat and therefore so readily agrees to make concessions to capitalism, demanding a slowing down of the rate of development of our industry, demanding concessions for the capitalist elements in town and country, demanding that the question of collective farms and state farms be relegated to the background, demanding that the monopoly of foreign trade be relaxed, etc., etc.

There is no doubt that the triumph of the Right deviation in our Party would unleash the forces of capitalism, undermine the revolutionary positions of the proletariat and increase the chances of the restoration of capitalism in our country.

Where does the danger of the "Left" (Trotskyite) deviation in our Party lie? In the fact that it overestimates the strength of our enemies, the strength of capitalism; it sees only the possibility of the restoration of capitalism, but cannot see the possibility of

building socialism by the efforts of our country; it gives way to despair and is obliged to console itself with chatter about Thermidor tendencies in our Party.

From the words of Lenin that "as long as we live in a small peasant country, there is a surer economic basis for capitalism in Russia than for communism," the "Left" deviation draws the false conclusion that it is impossible to build socialism in the U.S.S.R. at all; that we cannot get anywhere with the peasantry; that the idea of an alliance between the working class and the peasantry is an obsolete idea; that unless a victorious revolution in the West comes to our aid the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. must fall or degenerate; that unless we adopt the fantastic plan of super-industrialisation, even at the cost of a split with the peasantry, the cause of socialism in the U.S.S.R. must be regarded as doomed.

Hence the adventurism in the policy of the "Left" deviation. Hence its "superhuman" leaps in the sphere of policy.

There is no doubt that the triumph of the "Left" deviation in our Party would lead to the working class being separated from its peasant base, to the vanguard of the working class being separated from the rest of the working-class masses, and, consequently, to the defeat of the proletariat and to facilitating conditions for the restoration of capitalism.

You see, therefore, that both these dangers, the "Left" and the Right, both these deviations from the Leninist line, the Right and the "Left," lead to the same result, although from different directions.

Which of these dangers is worse? In my opinion one is as bad as the other.

The difference between these deviations from the point of view of successfully combating them consists in the fact that the danger of the "Left" deviation is at the present moment more obvious to the Party than the danger of the Right deviation. The fact that an intense struggle has been waged against the "Left" deviation for several years now has, of course, not been without its value for the Party. It is clear that the Party has learned a great deal in the years of the fight against the "Left," Trotskyite deviation and cannot now be easily deceived by "Left" phrases.

As for the Right danger, which existed before, but which has now become more prominent because of the growth of the petty-bourgeois elemental forces resulting from last year's grain-procurement crisis, I think it is not quite so obvious to certain sections of our Party. That is why our task must be—while not in the least relaxing the fight against the "Left," Trotskyite danger—to lay the emphasis on the fight against the Right deviation and to take all measures to make the danger of this deviation as obvious to the Party as the Trotskyite danger.

The question of the Right deviation would not, perhaps, be as acute as it is now, were it not for the fact that it is connected with the difficulties accompanying our development. But the whole point is that the existence of the Right deviation complicates the difficulties accompanying our development and hinders our efforts to overcome these difficulties. And for the very reason that the Right danger hinders the efforts to overcome the difficulties, the question of overcoming the Right danger has assumed particularly great importance for us.

A few words about the nature of our difficulties. It should be borne in mind that our difficulties should by no means be regarded as difficulties of stagnation or decline. There are difficulties that arise at a time of economic decline or stagnation, and in such cases efforts are made to render the stagnation less

painful, or the decline less profound. Our difficulties have nothing in common with difficulties of that kind. The characteristic feature of our difficulties is that they are difficulties of expansion, difficulties of growth. When we speak about difficulties we usually mean by what percentage industry ought to be expanded, by what percentage the crop area ought to be enlarged, by how many poods the crop yield ought to be increased, etc., etc. And because our difficulties are those of expansion, and not of decline or stagnation, they should not be anything particularly dangerous for the Party.

But difficulties are difficulties, nevertheless. And since in order to overcome difficulties it is necessary to exert all efforts, to display firmness and endurance, and since not everybody possesses sufficient firmness and endurance—perhaps as a result of fatigue and overstrain, or because of a preference for a quiet life, free from struggle and commotion—it is just here that vacillations and waverings begin to take place, tendencies to adopt the line of least resistance, talk about slowing down the rate of industrial development, about making concessions to the capitalist elements, about rejecting collective farms and state farms and, in general, everything that goes beyond the calm and familiar conditions of the daily routine.

But unless we overcome the difficulties in our path we shall make no progress. And in order to overcome the difficulties we must first defeat the Right danger, we must first overcome the Right deviation, which is hindering the fight against the difficulties and is trying to undermine our Party's will to fight and overcome the difficulties.

I am speaking, of course, of a real fight against the Right deviation, not a verbal, paper fight. There are people in our Party who, to soothe their conscience, are quite willing to proclaim a fight against the Right danger in the same way as priests

sometimes cry, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah!" But they will not undertake any practical measures at all to organise the fight against the Right deviation on a firm basis, and to overcome this deviation in actual fact. We call this tendency a conciliatory tendency towards the Right, frankly opportunist, deviation. It is not difficult to understand that the fight against this conciliatory tendency is an integral part of the general fight against the Right deviation, against the Right danger. For it is impossible to overcome the Right, opportunist deviation without waging a systematic fight against the conciliatory tendency, which takes the opportunists under its wing.

The question who are the exponents of the Right deviation is undoubtedly of interest, although it is not of decisive importance. We came across exponents of the Right danger in our lower Party organisations during the grain-procurement crisis last year, when a number of Communists in the volosts and villages opposed the Party's policy and worked towards forming a bond with kulak elements. As you know, such people were cleared out of the Party last spring, a matter specially referred to in the document of the Central Committee of our Party in February this year.

But it would be wrong to say that there are no such people left in our Party. If we go higher up, to the uyezds and gubernia Party organisations, or if we dig deeper into the Soviet and co-operative apparatus, we could without difficulty find exponents of the Right danger and conciliation towards it. We know of "letters," "declarations," and other documents written by a number of functionaries in our Party and Soviet apparatus, in which the drift towards the Right deviation is quite distinctly expressed. You know that these letters and documents were referred to in the verbatim report of the July plenum of the Central Committee.

If we go higher still, and ask about the members of the Central Committee, we shall have to admit that within the Central Committee, too, there are certain elements, very insignificant it is true, of a conciliatory attitude towards the Right danger. The verbatim report of the July plenum of the Central Committee provides direct proof of this.

Well, and what about the Political Bureau? Are there any deviations in the Political Bureau? In the Political Bureau there are neither Right nor "Left" deviations nor conciliators towards those deviations. This must be said quite categorically. It is time to put a stop to the tittle-tattle spread by enemies of the Party and by the oppositionists of all kinds about there being a Right deviation, or a conciliatory attitude towards the Right deviation, in the Political Bureau of our Central Committee.

Were there vacillations and waverings in the Moscow organisation, or in its top leadership, the Moscow Committee? Yes, there were. It would be absurd to assert now that there were no waverings, no vacillations there. The candid speech made by Penkov is direct proof of this. Penkov is by no means the least important person in the Moscow organisation and in the Moscow Committee. You heard him plainly and frankly admit that he had been wrong on a number of important questions of our Party policy. That does not mean, of course, that the Moscow Committee as a whole was subject to vacillation. No, it does not mean that. A document like the appeal of the Moscow Committee to the members of the Moscow organisation in October of this year undoubtedly shows that the Moscow Committee has succeeded in overcoming the vacillations of certain of its members. I have no doubt that the leading core of the Moscow Committee will be able completely to straighten out the situation.

Certain comrades are dissatisfied with the fact that the district organisations interfered in this matter and demanded that an end be put to the mistakes and vacillations of certain leaders of the Moscow organisation. I do not see how this dissatisfaction can be justified. What is there wrong about district activists of the Moscow organisation raising the demand that an end be put to mistakes and vacillations? Does not our work proceed under the slogan of self-criticism from below? Is it not a fact that self-criticism increases the activity of the Party rank and file and of the proletarian rank and file in general? What is there wrong or dangerous in the fact that the district activists proved equal to the situation?

Did the Central Committee act rightly in interfering in this matter? I think that it did. Berzin thinks that the Central Committee acted too drastically in demanding the removal of one of the district leaders to whom the district organisation was opposed. That is absolutely wrong. Let me remind Berzin of certain incidents in 1919 or 1920, when some members of the Central Committee who were guilty of certain, in my opinion, not very serious errors in respect of the Party line were, on Lenin's suggestion, subjected to exemplary punishment, one of them being sent to Turkestan, and the other almost paying the penalty of expulsion from the Central Committee.

Was Lenin right in acting as he did? I think he was quite right. The situation in the Central Committee then was not what it is now. Half the members of the Central Committee followed Trotsky, and the situation in the Central Committee was not a stable one. The Central Committee today is acting much more mildly. Why? Is it, perhaps, because we want to be more gentle than Lenin? No, that is not the point. The point is that the position of the Central Committee is more stable now than it was then, and the Central Committee can afford to act more mildly.

Nor is Sakharov right in asserting that the intervention of the Central Committee was belated. Sakharov is wrong because he evidently does not know that, properly speaking, the intervention of the Central Committee began in February of this year. Sakharov can convince himself of that if he desires. It is true that the intervention of the Central Committee did not immediately yield required results. But it would be strange to blame the Central Committee for that.

Conclusions:

- 1) the Right danger is a serious danger in our Party, for it is rooted in the social and economic situation in our country;
- 2) the danger of the Right deviation is aggravated by the existence of difficulties which cannot be overcome unless the Right deviation and conciliation towards it are overcome;
- 3) in the Moscow organisation there were vacillations and waverings, there were elements of instability;
- 4) the core of the Moscow Committee, with the help of the Central Committee and the district activists, took all measures to put an end to these vacillations;
- 5) there can be no doubt that the Moscow Committee will succeed in overcoming the mistakes which began to take shape in the past;
- 6) our task is to put a stop to the internal struggle, to unite the Moscow organisation into a single whole, and to carry through the elections in the Party units successfully on the basis of fully developed self-criticism. (Applause.)

Pravda, No. 247, October 23, 1928

Stalin

**From; Political Report of the Central Committee to the  
Sixteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)**

June 27, 1930

.....It is known, for example, that the real wages of the workers, including social insurance and allocations from, profits to the fund for improvement of the workers living conditions, have risen to 167 per cent of the pre-war level. During the past three years, the workers social insurance budget alone has grown from 980,000,000 rubles in 1927-28 to 1,400,000 000 rubles in 1929-30. The amount spent on mother and child care during the past three years (1929-30) was 494,000,000 rubles. The amount spent on pre-school education (kindergartens, playgrounds, etc.) during the same period was 204,000,000 rubles. The amount spent on workers' housing was 1,880,000,000 rubles.

This does not mean, of course, that everything necessary for an important increase in real wages has already been done, that real wages could not have been raised to a higher level. If this has not been done, it is because of the bureaucracy in our supply organisations in general, and primarily and particularly because of the bureaucracy in the consumers' co-operatives.

(...)

What is the essence of the Bolshevik offensive under our present conditions?

The essence of the Bolshevik offensive lies, first and foremost, in mobilising the class vigilance and revolutionary activity of the masses against the capitalist elements in our country; in mobilising the creative initiative and independent activity of the masses against bureaucracy in our institutions and organisations, which keeps concealed the colossal reserves latent

in the depths of our system and prevents them from being used; in organising emulation and labour enthusiasm among the masses for raising the productivity of labour, for developing socialist construction.

The essence of the Bolshevik offensive lies, secondly, in organising the reconstruction of the entire practical work of the trade-union, co-operative, Soviet and all other mass organisations to fit the requirements of the reconstruction period; in creating in them a core of the most active and revolutionary functionaries, pushing aside and isolating the opportunist, trade-unionist, bureaucratic elements; in expelling from them the alien and degenerate elements and promoting new cadres from the rank and file.

The essence of the Bolshevik offensive lies, further, in mobilising the maximum funds for financing our industry, for financing our state farms and collective farms, in appointing the best people in our Party for developing all this work.

The essence of the Bolshevik offensive lies, lastly, in mobilising the Party itself for organising the whole offensive; in strengthening and giving a sharp edge to the Party organisations, exposing elements of bureaucracy and degeneration from them; in isolating and thrusting aside those that express Right or "Left" deviations from the Leninist line and bringing to the fore genuine, staunch Leninists.

Such are the principles of the Bolshevik offensive at the present time.

How has the Party carried out this plan of the offensive?

You know that the Party has carried out this plan with the utmost consistency.

Matters started by the Party developing wide self-criticism, concentrating the attention of the masses upon shortcomings in our work of construction, upon short-comings in our organisations and institutions. The need for intensifying self-criticism was proclaimed already at the Fifteenth Congress. The Shakty affair and the wrecking activities in various branches of industry, which revealed the absence of revolutionary vigilance in some of the Party organisations, on the one hand, and the struggle against the kulaks and the defects revealed in our rural organisations, on the other hand, gave a further impetus to self-criticism. In its appeal of June 2, 1928, (Original Footnote: This refers to an appeal of the C.C., CPSU(B) "To All Party Members and to All Workers" on developing self-criticism, which was published in Pravda, No.128, June 3, 1928) the Central Committee gave final shape to the campaign for self-criticism, calling upon all the forces of the Party and the working class to develop self-criticism "from top to bottom and from the bottom up" "irrespective of persons." Dissociating itself from the Trotskyist "criticism emanating from the other side of the barricade and aiming at discrediting and weakening the Soviet regime, the Party proclaimed the task of self-criticism to be the ruthless exposure of shortcomings in our work for the purpose of improving our work of construction and strengthening the Soviet regime. As is known, the Party's appeal met with a most lively response among the masses of the working class and peasantry

Further, the Party organised a wide campaign for the struggle against bureaucracy and issued the slogan of purging the Party, trade-union cooperative and Soviet organisations of alien and bureaucratised elements. A sequel to this campaign was the well-known decision of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of March 16, 1930, concerning the promotion of workers to posts in the state apparatus and the organisation of

mass workers' control of the Soviet apparatus (patronage by factories). (Original Footnote: The decision of the C.C. and C.C.C., CPSU(B) on "Promotion of Workers to Posts in the State Apparatus, and Mass Workers' Control from Below of the Soviet Apparatus (Patronage by Factories)" was published in Pravda, No. 74, March 16, 1930.) As is known, this campaign evoked tremendous enthusiasm and activity among the masses of the workers. The result of this campaign has been an immense increase in the Party's prestige among the masses of the working people, an increase in the confidence of the working class in the Party, the influx into the Party of further hundreds of thousands of workers, and the resolutions passed by workers expressing the desire to join the Party in whole shops and factories. Lastly, a result of this campaign has been that our organisations have got rid of a number of conservative and bureaucratic elements, and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions has got rid of the old, opportunist leadership.

(...)

The problem of combating bureaucracy. The danger of bureaucracy lies, first of all, in that it keeps concealed the colossal reserves latent in the depths of our system and prevents them from being utilised, in that it strives to nullify the creative initiative of the masses, ties it hand and foot with red tape and reduces every new undertaking by the Party to petty and useless trivialities. The danger of bureaucracy lies, secondly, in that it does not tolerate the checking of fulfilment and strives to convert the basic directives of the leading organisations into mere sheets of paper divorced from life. It is not only, and not so much, the old bureaucrats stranded in our institutions who constitute this danger; it is also, and particularly, the new bureaucrats, the Soviet bureaucrats; and the "Communist" bureaucrats are by no means the least among them. I have in mind those "Communists" who try to substitute bureaucratic orders and "decrees," in the

potency of which they believe as in a fetish, for the creative initiative and independent activity of the vast masses of the working class and peasantry.

The task is to smash bureaucracy in our institutions and organisations, to get rid of bureaucratic "habits" and "customs" and to clear the way for utilising the reserves of our social system, for developing the creative initiative and independent activity of the masses.

That is not an easy task. It cannot be carried out "in a trice." But it must be carried out at all costs if we really want to transform our country on the basis of socialism.

In the struggle against bureaucracy, the Party is working along four lines: that of developing self-criticism, that of organising the checking of fulfilment, that of purging the apparatus and, lastly, that of promoting from below to posts in the apparatus devoted workers from those of working-class origin.

The task is to exert every effort to carry out all these measures.

Stalin

## **The Importance and Tasks of the Complaints-Bureaus**

**April 7, 1932**

The work of the Complaints Bureaus is of tremendous importance in the struggle to remove shortcomings in our Party, Soviet, economic, trade-union and Komsomol apparatuses, in improving our administrative apparatus.

Lenin said that **without an apparatus we should have perished long ago, and that without a systematic, stubborn struggle to improve the apparatus we should certainly perish**. This means that resolute and systematic struggle against conservatism, bureaucracy and red tape in our apparatus is an essential task of the Party, the working class and all the working people of our country.

The tremendous importance of the **Complaints Bureaus** consists in their being a serious means of carrying out Lenin's behest concerning the struggle to improve the apparatus.

It is indisputable that the Complaints Bureaus have considerable achievements to their credit in this field.

The task is to consolidate the results attained and to achieve decisive successes in this matter. There can be no doubt that if the Complaints Bureaus rally around them all the more active sections of the workers and collective farmers, drawing them into the work of administering the state and attentively heeding the voice of the working people both within and without the Party, these decisive successes will be won.

Let us hope that the five-day review of the work of the Complaints Bureaus will serve as a stimulus for further

expansion of their work along the line indicated by our teacher Lenin.

(1) The Complaints Bureau was set up in April 1919 under the People's Commissariat of State Control, which in 1920 was changed to the Peoples' Commissariat of Workers' And peasant' Inspection. The tasks and scoop of the work of the Central Bureau of Complaints & Applications were defined by a regulation dated May 4, 1919, and those of the local departments the Central Bureau by a regulation dated May 24th, 1919, published over the signature of Stalin, People's Commissar of State Control. From the day they were formed the Central and local bureaus did much work in investigating and checking complaints and statements of working people, enlisting in this work an extensive active of workers and peasants. From February 1934 the Bureau of Complaints and Applications was included in the system of the Soviet Control Commission under the Council of People's Commissariats, and from September 1940 it has formed a department of the Peoples Commissariat (subsequently Ministry) of State Control of the USSR.

Stalin's article, "The Importance of the USSR Complaints Bureaus" was written in connection with the all-Union five-day review and checking of the work of the bureaus carried out on April 9-14th, 1932, by a decision of the Presidium of the Central Control Commission of the CPSU(B), and the Collegium of the People's Commissariat of the USSR.

Stalin

**From; Report to the Seventeenth Party Congress on the Work  
of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.)**

January 26, 1934

It would be wrong, however, to think that industry has only successes to record. No, it also has its defects. The chief of these are:

- a) The continuing lag of the iron and steel industry;
- b) The lack of order in the non-ferrous metals industry;
- c) The underestimation of the great importance of developing the mining of local coal for the general fuel supply of the country (Moscow Region, the Caucasus, the Urals, Karaganda, Central Asia, Siberia, the Far East, the Northern Territory, etc.);
- d) The absence of proper attention to the question of organising a new oil centre in areas of the Urals, Bashkiria, and the Emba;
- e) The absence of serious concern for expanding the production of goods for mass consumption both in the light and food industries and in the timber industry;
- f) The absence of proper attention to the question of developing local industry;
- g) An absolutely impermissible attitude towards the question of improving the quality of output;
- h) The continuing lag as regards increasing the productivity of labour, reducing the cost of production, and adopting business accounting;

i) The fact that bad organisation of work and wages, lack of personal responsibility in work, and wage equalisation have not yet been eliminated;

j) The fact that red-tape and bureaucratic methods of management in the economic People's Commissariats and their bodies, including the People's Commissariats of the light and food industries, are still far from having been eliminated.

The absolute necessity for the speedy elimination of these defects scarcely needs any further explanation. As you know, the iron and steel and non-ferrous metals industries failed to fulfil their plan throughout the first five-year plan period; nor have they fulfilled the plan for the first year of the second five year plan period. If they continue to lag behind they may become a brake on industry and the cause of failures in its work. As to the creation of new centres of the coal and oil industries, it is not difficult to understand that unless this urgent task is fulfilled both industry and transport may run aground. The question of goods for mass consumption and of developing local industry, as well as the questions of improving the quality of output, of increasing the productivity of labour, of reducing production costs, and of adopting business accounting also need no further explanation. As for the bad organisation of work and wages, and red-tape and bureaucratic methods of management, the case of the Donbas and of the enterprises of the light and food industries has shown that this dangerous disease is to be found in all branches of industry and hinders their development. If it is not eliminated, industry will be in a bad way.

Our immediate tasks are:

1) To maintain the present leading role of machine building in the system of industry.

2) To eliminate the lag of the iron and steel industry.

- 3) To put the non-ferrous metals industries in order.
- 4) To develop to the utmost the mining of local coal in all the areas already known; to develop new coalfields (for example, in the Bureya district in the Far East), and to convert the Kuzbas into a second Donbas. (Prolonged applause.)
- 5) Seriously to set about organising a centre of the oil industry in the areas of the western and southern slopes of the Urals range.
- 6) To expand the production of goods for mass consumption by all the economic People's Commissariats.
- 7) To develop local Soviet industry; to give it the opportunity of displaying initiative in the production of goods for mass consumption and to give it all possible assistance in the way of raw materials and funds.
- 8) To improve the quality of the goods produced; to stop turning out incomplete sets of goods, and to punish all those comrades, irrespective of their post, who violate or evade Soviet laws concerning the quality and completeness of sets of goods.
- 9) To secure a systematic increase in the productivity of labour, a reduction in production costs, and the adoption of business accounting.
- 10) To put an end to lack of personal responsibility in work and to wage equalisation.
- 11) To eliminate red-tape and bureaucratic methods of management in all the departments of the economic Commissariats, and to check systematically the fulfilment of the decisions and instructions of the directing centres by the subordinate bodies.

## Questions of Organizational Leadership

I have spoken of our successes. I have spoken of the victory of the Party line in the sphere of the national economy and of culture, and also in the sphere of overcoming anti-Leninist groups in the Party. I have spoken of the historic significance of our victory. But this does not mean that we have achieved victory everywhere and in all things, and that all questions have already been settled. Such successes and such victories do not occur in real life. We still have plenty of unsolved problems and defects of all sorts. Ahead of us is a host of problems demanding solution. But it does undoubtedly mean that the greater part of the urgent and immediate problems has already been successfully solved, and in this sense the very great victory of our Party is beyond doubt.

But here the question arises: How was this victory brought about, how was it actually achieved, as the result of what fight, as the result of what efforts?

Some people think that it is sufficient to draw up a correct Party line, proclaim it for all to hear, state it in the form of general theses and resolutions, and have it voted for unanimously, for victory to come of itself, automatically, as it were. That, of course, is wrong. It is a gross delusion. Only incorrigible bureaucrats and red-tapists can think so. As a matter of fact, these successes and victories did not come automatically, but as the result of a fierce struggle for the application of the Party line. Victory never comes of itself— it is usually won by effort. Good resolutions and declarations in favour of the general line of the Party are only a beginning; they merely express the desire for victory, but not the victory itself. After the correct line has been laid down, after a correct solution of the problem has been found, success depends on how the work is organised; on the organisation of the struggle for carrying out the Party line; on the proper selection of

personnel; on checking upon the fulfilment of the decisions of the leading bodies. Other wise the correct line of the Party and the correct solutions are in danger of being seriously prejudiced. More than that, after the correct political line has been laid down, organisational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, its success or failure.

As a matter of fact, victory was achieved and won by a systematic and fierce struggle against all sorts of difficulties in the way of carrying out the Party line; by overcoming these difficulties; by mobilising the Party and the working class for the task of overcoming the difficulties; by organising the struggle to overcome the difficulties; by removing inefficient executives and choosing better ones, capable of waging the struggle against difficulties.

What are these difficulties; and where do they lie?

They are difficulties of our organisational work, difficulties of our organisational leadership. They lie in ourselves, in our leading people, in our organisations, in the apparatus of our Party, Soviet, economic, trade-union, Young Communist League and all other organisations.

We must realise that the strength and prestige of our Party and Soviet, economic and all other organisations, and of their leaders, have grown to an unprecedented degree. And precisely because their strength and prestige have grown to an unprecedented degree, it is their work that now determines everything, or nearly everything. There can be no justification for references to so-called objective conditions. Now that the correctness of the Party's political line has been confirmed by the experience of a number of years, and that there is no longer any doubt as to the readiness of the workers and peasants to support this line, the part played by so-called objective conditions has been reduced to

a minimum; whereas the part played by our organisations and their leaders has become decisive, exceptional. What does this mean? It means that from now on nine-tenths of the responsibility for the failures and defects in our work rest, not on "objective" conditions, but on ourselves, and on ourselves alone.

We have in our Party more than 2,000,000 members and candidate members. In the Young Communist League we have more than 4,000,000 members and candidate members. We have over 3,000,000 worker and peasant correspondents. The Society for the Promotion of Air and Chemical Defence has more than 12,000,000 members. The trade unions have a membership of over 17,000,000. It is to these organisations that we are indebted for our successes. And if, in spite of the existence of such organisations and of such possibilities, which facilitate the achievement of successes, we still have quite a number of shortcomings in our work and not a few failures, then it is only we ourselves, our organisational work, our bad organisational leadership, that are to blame for this.

Bureaucracy and red tape in the administrative apparatus; idle chatter about "leadership in general" instead of real and concrete leadership; the functional structure of our organisations and lack of individual responsibility; lack of personal responsibility in work, and wage equalisation; the absence of a systematic check on the fulfilment of decisions; fear of self-criticism — these are the sources of our difficulties; this is where our difficulties now lie.

It would be naive to think that these difficulties can be overcome by means of resolutions and decisions. The bureaucrats and red-tapists have long been past masters in the art of demonstrating their loyalty to Party and Government decisions in words, and pigeonholing them in deed. In order to overcome these difficulties it was necessary to put an end to the disparity between our organisational work and the requirements of the

political line of the Party; it was necessary to raise the level of organisational leadership in all spheres of the national economy to the level of political leadership; it was necessary to see to it that our organisational work ensured the practical realisation of the political slogans and decisions of the Party.

In order to overcome these difficulties and achieve success it was necessary to organise the struggle to eliminate them; it was necessary to draw the masses of the workers and peasants into this struggle; it was necessary to mobilise the Party itself; it was necessary to purge the Party and the economic organisations of unreliable, unstable and degenerate elements.

What was needed for this?

We had to organise:

- 1) Full development of self-criticism and exposure of shortcomings in our work.
- 2) The mobilisation of the Party, Soviet, economic, trade union, and Young Communist League organisations for the struggle against difficulties.
- 3) The mobilisation of the masses of the workers and peasants to fight for the application of the slogans and decisions of the Party and of the Government.
- 4) Full development of emulation and shock-brigade work among the working people.
- 5) A wide network of Political Departments of machine and tractor stations and state farms and the bringing of the Party and Soviet leadership closer to the villages.
- 6) The subdivision of the People's Commissariats, chief boards, and trusts, and the bringing of economic leadership closer to the enterprises.

7) The abolition of lack of personal responsibility in work and the elimination of wage equalisation.

8) The elimination of the "functional system," the extension of individual responsibility, and a policy aiming at the abolition of collegium management.

9) Stronger checking on the fulfilment of decisions, and a policy aiming at the reorganisation of the power, but who are incapable of leadership, incapable of organising anything. Last year I had a conversation with one such comrade, a very respected comrade, but an incorrigible windbag, capable of drowning any live undertaking in a flood of talk. Here is the conversation:

I: How are you getting on with the sowing?

He: With the sowing, Comrade Stalin? We have mobilised ourselves. (Laughter.)

I: Well, and what then?

He: We have put the question squarely. (Laughter.)

I: And what next?

He: There is a turn, Comrade Stalin; soon there will be a turn. (Laughter.) I: But still?

He: We can see an indication of some improvement. (Laughter.)

I: But still, how are you getting on with the sowing?

He: So far, Comrade Stalin, we have not made any headway with the sowing. (General laughter?)

There you have the portrait of the windbag. They have mobilised themselves, they have put the question squarely, they have a turn and some improvement, but things remain as they were.

This is exactly how a Ukrainian worker recently described the state of a certain organisation when he was asked whether that organisation had any definite line: "Well," he said, "as to a line . . . they have a line all right, but they don't seem to be doing any work." (General laughter.) Evidently that organisation also has its honest windbags.

Besides the incorrigible bureaucrats and red-tapists, as to whose removal there are no differences of opinion among us, there are two other types of executive who retard our work, hinder our work, and hold up our advance.

One of these types of executive consists of people who rendered certain services in the past, people who have become big-wigs, who consider that Party decisions and Soviet laws are not written for them, but for fools. These are the people who do not consider it their duty to fulfil the decisions of the Party and of the Government, and who thus destroy the foundations of Party and state discipline. What do they count upon when they violate Party decisions and Soviet laws? They presume that the Soviet Government will not venture to touch them, because of their past services. These overconceited big-wigs think that they are irreplaceable, and that they can violate the decisions of the leading bodies with impunity. What is to be done with executives of this kind? They must unhesitatingly be removed from their leading posts, irrespective of past services. (Voices: "Quite right!") They must be demoted to lower positions and this must be announced in the press. (Voices: "Quite right!") This is essential in order to bring those conceited big-wig bureaucrats down a peg or two, and to put them in their proper place. This is essential in order to strengthen Party and Soviet discipline in the whole of our work. (Voices: "Quite right!" Applause.)

And now about the second type of executive. I have in mind the windbags, I would say honest windbags (laughter), people who

are honest and loyal to the Soviet power, but who are incapable of leadership, incapable of organising anything. Last year I had a conversation with one such comrade, a very respected comrade, but an incorrigible windbag, capable of drowning any live undertaking in a flood of talk. Here is the conversation:

I: How are you getting on with the sowing?

He: With the sowing, Comrade Stalin? We have mobilised ourselves. (Laughter.)

I: Well, and what then?

He: We have put the question squarely. (Laughter.)

I: And what next?

He: There is a turn, Comrade Stalin; soon there will be a turn. (Laughter.)

I: But still?

He: We can see an indication of some improvement. (Laughter.)

I: But still, how are you getting on with the sowing?

He: So far, Comrade Stalin, we have not made any headway with the sowing. (General laughter.)

There you have the portrait of the windbag. They have mobilised themselves, they have put the question squarely, they have a turn and some improvement, but things remain as they were.

This is exactly how a Ukrainian worker recently described the state of a certain organisation when he was asked whether that organisation had any definite line: "Well," he said, "as to a line . . . they have a line all right, but they don't seem to be doing any work." (General laughter.) Evidently that organisation also has its honest windbags.

And when such windbags are dismissed from their posts and are given jobs far removed from operative work, they shrug their shoulders in perplexity and ask: "Why have we been dismissed? Did we not do all that was necessary to get the work done? Did we not organise a rally of shock brigaders? Did we not proclaim the slogans of the Party and of the Government at the conference of shock brigaders? Did we not elect the whole of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee to the Honorary Presidium? (General laughter.) Did we not send greetings to Comrade Stalin—what more do you want of us?" (General laughter.)

What is to be done with these incorrigible windbags? Why, if they were allowed to remain on operative work they are capable of drowning every live undertaking in a flood of watery and endless speeches. Obviously, they must be removed from leading posts and given work other than operative work. There is no place for windbags on operative work. (Voices: "Quite right!" Applause.)

I have already briefly reported how the Central Committee handled the selection of personnel for the Soviet and economic organisations, and how it strengthened the checking on the fulfilment of decisions. Comrade Kaganovich will deal with this in greater detail in his report on the third item of the congress agenda.

I should like to say a few words, however, about further work in connection with increased checking on the fulfilment of decisions.

The proper organisation of checking on the fulfilment of decisions is of decisive importance in the fight against bureaucracy and red tape. Are the decisions of the leading bodies carried out, or are they pigeon-holed by bureaucrats and red-tapists? Are they carried out properly, or are they distorted? Is

the apparatus working conscientiously and in a Bolshevik manner, or is it working to no purpose? These things can be promptly found out only by a well-organised check on the fulfilment of decisions. A well-organised check on the fulfilment of decisions is the searchlight which helps to reveal how the apparatus is functioning at any moment and to bring bureaucrats and red-tapists into the light of day. We can say with certainty that nine-tenths of our defects and failures are due to the lack of a properly organised check on the fulfilment of decisions. There can be no doubt that with such a check on fulfilment, defects and failures would certainly have been averted.

But if checking on fulfilment is to achieve its purpose, two conditions at least are required: firstly, that fulfilment is checked systematically and not spasmodically; secondly, that the work of checking on fulfilment in all sections of the Party, Soviet and economic organisations is entrusted not to second rate people, but to people with sufficient authority, to the leaders of the organisations concerned.

Alexandra Kollontai

## **The Workers Opposition, 1921**

### On Bureaucracy & Self-activity of The Masses

#### 1. Initiative... & The Roots of Apathy

Is it to be bureaucracy or self-activity of the masses? This is the second point of the controversy between the leaders of our Party and the Workers' Opposition. The question of bureaucracy was raised and only superficially discussed at the eighth Soviet Congress. Herein, just as in the question on the part to be played by the trade unions and their problems, the discussion was shifted to a wrong channel. The controversy on this question is more fundamental than it might seem.

The essence is this: what system of administration in a workers' republic during the period of creation of the economic basis for Communism secures more freedom for the class creative powers? Is it a bureaucratic state system or a system of wide practical self-activity of the working masses? The question relates to the system of administration and the controversy arises between two diametrically opposed principles: **bureaucracy or self-activity**. And yet they try to squeeze it into the scope of the problem that concerns itself only with methods of animating the Soviet institutions.

Here we observe the same substitution of the subjects discussed as the one that occurred in the debates on the trade unions. It is necessary to state definitely and clearly that half-measures, changes in relations between central bodies and local economic organizations, and other such petty non-essential innovations (such as responsible officials or the injection of Party members into the Soviet institutions, where these Communists are subjected to all the bad influences of the prevailing bureaucratic

system, and disintegrate among the elements of the former bourgeois class) will not bring 'democratisation' or life into the Soviet institutions.

This is not the point, however. Every child in Soviet Russia knows that the vital problem is to draw the wide toiling masses of workers, peasants and others, into the reconstruction of economy in the proletarian state, and to change the conditions of life accordingly. The task is clear: it is to arouse initiative and self-activity in the masses. But what is being done to encourage and develop that initiative? Nothing at all. Quite the contrary. At every meeting we call upon the working men and women to 'create a new life, build up and assist the Soviet authorities'. But no sooner do the masses or individual groups of workers take our admonition seriously and attempt to apply it in real life than some bureaucratic institution, feeling ignored, hastily cuts short the efforts of the over-zealous initiators.

Every comrade can easily recall scores of instances then workers themselves attempted to organise dining-rooms, day nurseries for children, transportation of wood, etc. Each time a lively, immediate interest in the undertaking died from the red tape, interminable negotiations with the various institutions that brought no results, or resulted in refusals, new requisitions etc. Wherever there was an opportunity under the impetus of the masses themselves – of the masses using their own efforts – to equip a dining-room, to store a supply of wood, or to organise a nursery, refusal always followed refusal from the central institutions. Explanations were forthcoming that there was no equipment for the dining-room, lack of horses for transporting the wood, and absence of an adequate building for the nursery. How much bitterness is generated among working men and women when they see and know that if they had been given the right, and an opportunity to act, they could themselves have seen

the project through. How painful it is to receive a refusal of necessary material! when such material had already been found and procured by the workers themselves. Their initiative is therefore slackening and the desire to act is dying out. 'If that is the case', people say, 'let officials themselves take care of us'. As a result, there is generated a most harmful division: we are the toiling people, they are the Soviet officials, on whom everything depends. This is the whole trouble.

## **2. The Essence of Bureaucracy**

Meanwhile, what are our Party leaders doing? Do they attempt to find the cause of the evil? Do they openly admit that their very system, which was carried out into life through the Soviets, paralyses and deadens the masses, though it was meant to encourage their initiative? No, our Party leaders do nothing of the kind. Just the opposite. Instead of finding means to encourage the mass initiative which could fit perfectly into our flexible Soviet institutions, our Party leaders all of a sudden appear in the role of defenders and knights of bureaucracy. How many comrades follow Trotsky's example and repeat that 'we suffer, not because we adopt the bad sides of bureaucracy, but because we have failed so far to learn the good ones' ('On one common plan', by Trotsky).

**Bureaucracy is a direct negation of mass self-activity.** Whoever therefore accepts the principle of involving the masses in active participation as a basis for the new system of the workers' republic, **cannot look for good or bad sides in bureaucracy.** He must openly and resolutely reject this useless system. Bureaucracy is not a product of our misery as Comrade Zinovieff tries to convince us. Neither is it a reflection of blind subordination' to superiors, generated by militarism, as others assert. This phenomenon has deeper roots. It is a by-product of the same cause that explains our policy of double-dealing in

relation to the trade unions, namely, the growing influence in the Soviet institutions of elements hostile in spirit not only to Communism, but also to the elementary aspirations of the working masses. Bureaucracy is a scourge that pervades the very marrow of our Party as well as of the Soviet institutions. This fact is emphasised not only by the Workers' Opposition. It is also recognised by many thoughtful comrades not belonging to this group.

Restrictions on initiative are imposed, not only in regard to the activity of the non-party masses (this would only be a logical and reasonable condition, in the atmosphere of the civil war). The initiative of Party members themselves is restricted. Every independent attempt, every new thought that passes through the censorship of our centre, is considered as 'heresy', as a violation of Party discipline, as an attempt to infringe on the prerogatives of the centre, which must 'foresee' everything and 'decree' everything and anything. If anything is not decreed one must wait, for the time will come when the centre at its leisure will decree. Only then, and within sharply restricted limits, will one be allowed to express one's 'initiative'. What would happen if some of the members of the Russian Communist Party – those, for instance, who are fond of birds – decided to form a society for the preservation of birds? The idea itself seems useful. It does not in any way undermine any 'state project'. But it only seems this way. All of a sudden there would appear some bureaucratic institution which would claim the right to manage this particular undertaking. That particular institution would immediately 'incorporate' the society into the Soviet machine, deadening, thereby, the direct initiative. And instead of direct initiative, there would appear a heap of paper decrees and regulations which would give enough work to hundreds of other officials and add to the work of mails and transport.

The harm in bureaucracy does not only lie in the red tape as some comrades would want us to believe – they narrow the whole controversy to the sanitation of Soviet institutions’. The harm lies in the solution of all problems, not by means of an open exchange of opinions or by the immediate efforts of all concerned, but by means of formal decisions handed down from the central institutions. These decisions are arrived at either by one person or by an extremely limited collective, wherein the interested people are quite often entirely absent. Some third person decides your fate: this is the whole essence of bureaucracy. In the face of the growing suffering in the working class, brought about by the confusion of the present transitory period, bureaucracy finds itself particularly weak and impotent. Miracles of enthusiasm in stimulating the productive forces and alleviating working conditions can only be performed by the active initiative of the interested workers themselves, provided it is not restricted and repressed at every step by a hierarchy of ‘permissions’ and ‘decrees’. Marxists, and Bolsheviki in particular, have been strong and powerful in that they never stressed the policy of immediate success of the movement (This line, by the way, has always been followed by the opportunists-compromisers). Marxists have always attempted to put the workers in such conditions as would give them the opportunity to temper their revolutionary will and to develop their creative abilities. The workers’ initiative is indispensable for us, and yet we do not give it a chance to develop. Fear of criticism and of freedom of thought, by combining together with bureaucracy, often produce ridiculous results. There can be no self-activity without freedom of thought and opinion, for self-activity manifest itself not only in initiative, action and work, but in independent thought as well. We give no freedom to class activity, we are afraid of criticism, we have ceased to rely on the masses: hence we have bureaucracy with us. That is why the Workers’ Opposition

considers that bureaucracy is our enemy, our scourge, and the greatest danger to the future existence of the Communist Party itself.

### **3. Against The Bureaucracy in The Party**

In order to do away with the bureaucracy that is finding its shelter in the Soviet institutions, we must first get rid of all bureaucracy in the Party itself. That is where we face the immediate struggle. As soon as the Party – not in theory but in practice – recognised the self-activity of the masses as the basis of our State, the Soviet institutions will again automatically become living institutions, destined to carry out the Communist project. They will cease to be the institutions of red tape and the laboratories for still-born decrees into which they have very rapidly degenerated.

What shall we do then in order to destroy bureaucracy in the Party and replace it by workers' democracy? First of all it is necessary to understand that our leaders are wrong when they say: 'Just now we agree to loosen the reins somewhat, for there is no immediate danger on the military front, but as soon as we again feel the danger we shall return to the military system in the Party.' We must remember that heroism saved Petrograd, more than once defended Lugansk, other centres, and whole regions. Was it the Red Army alone that put up the defence? No. There was, besides, the heroic self-activity and initiative of the masses themselves. Every comrade will recall that during the moments of supreme danger, the Party always appealed to this self-activity, for it saw in it the sheet-anchor of salvation. It is true that at times of threatening danger, Party and class discipline must be stricter. There must be more self-sacrifice, exactitude in performing duties, etc. But between these manifestations of class spirit and the 'blind subordination' which is being advocated lately in the Party, there is a great difference.

In the name of Party regeneration and the elimination of bureaucracy from the Soviet institutions, the Workers' Opposition, together with a group of responsible workers in Moscow, demand complete realization of all democratic principles, not only for the present period of respite but also for times of internal and external tension. This is the first and basic condition for the Party's regeneration, for its return to the principles of its programme, from which it is more and more deviating in practice under the pressure of elements that are foreign to it.

The second condition, the vigorous fulfilment of which is insisted upon by the Workers' Opposition, is the expulsion from the Party of all non-proletarian elements. The stronger the Soviet authority becomes, the greater is the number of middle class, and sometimes even openly hostile elements, joining the Party. The elimination of these elements must be complete and thorough. Those in charge of it must take into account the fact that the most revolutionary elements of non-proletarian origin had joined the Party during the first period of the October revolution. The Party must become a Workers' Party. Only then will it be able vigorously to repeal all the influences that are now being brought to bear on it by petty-bourgeois elements, peasants, or by the faithful servants of Capital – the specialists.

The Workers' Opposition proposes to register all members who are non-workers and who joined the Party since 1919, and to reserve for them the right to appeal within three months from the decisions arrived at, in order that they might join the Party again.

At the same time, it is necessary to establish a 'working status' for all those non-working class elements who will try to get back into the Party, by providing that every applicant to membership of the Party must have worked a certain period of time at manual

labour: under general working conditions, before he becomes eligible for enrolment into the Party.

The third decisive step towards democratization of the Party is the elimination of all non-working class elements from administrative positions. In other words, the central, provincial, and county committees of the Party must be so composed that workers closely acquainted with the conditions of the working masses should have the preponderant majority therein. Closely related to this demand stands the further demand of converting all our Party centres, beginning from the Central Executive Committee and including the provincial county committees, from institutions taking care of routine, everyday work, into institutions of control over Soviet policy. We have already remarked that the crisis in our Party is a direct outcome of three distinct crosscurrents, corresponding to the three different social groups: the working class, the peasantry and middle class, and elements of the former bourgeoisie – that is, specialists, technicians and men of affairs.

Problems of State-wide importance compel both the local and central Soviet institutions, including even the Council of People's Commissars and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, to lend an ear to, and conform with, these three distinct tendencies, representing the groups that compose the population of Soviet Russia. As a result, the class line of our general policy is blurred, and the necessary stability is lost. Considerations of State interests begin to outweigh the interests of the workers.

To help the Central Committee and Party Committees stand firmly on the side of our class policy, to help them call all our Soviet institutions to order each time that a decision in Soviet policy becomes necessary (as, for instance, in the question of the trade unions) it is necessary to disassociate the prerogatives of such responsible officials who, at one and the same time, have

responsible posts both in the Soviet institutions and in the Communist Party centres. We must remember that Soviet Russia has not so far been a socially homogeneous unit. On the contrary, it has represented a heterogeneous social conglomeration. The State authority is compelled to reconcile these, at times mutually hostile, interests by choosing the middle ground.

The Central Committee of our Party must become the supreme directing centre of our class policy, the organ of class thought and control over the practical policy of the Soviets, and the spiritual personification of our basic programme. To ensure this, it is necessary, particularly in the Central Committee, to restrict multiple office-holding by those who, whilst being members of the Central Committee, also occupy high posts in the Soviet government. For this purpose, the Workers' Opposition proposes the formation of Party centres, which would really serve as organs of ideal control over the Soviet institutions, and would direct their actions along clear-cut class lines. To increase Party activity, it would be necessary to implement everywhere the following measure: at least one third of Party members in these centres should be permanently forbidden to act as Party members and Soviet officials at the same time.

The fourth basic demand of the Workers' Opposition is that the Party must reverse its policy in relation to the elective principle.

Appointments are permissible only as exceptions. Lately they have begun to prevail as a rule. Appointments are very characteristic of bureaucracy, and yet at present they are a general, legalized and well-recognised daily occurrence. The procedure of appointments produces a very unhealthy atmosphere in the Party. It disrupts the relationship of equality amongst the members by rewarding friends and punishing enemies, and by other no less harmful practices in Party and Soviet life. Appointments lessen the sense of duty and

responsibility to the masses in the ranks of those appointed, for they are not responsible to the masses. This makes the division between the leaders and the rank and file members still sharper. Every appointee, as a matter of fact, is beyond any control. The leaders are not able closely to watch his activity while the masses cannot call him to account and dismiss him if necessary. As a rule every appointee is surrounded by an atmosphere of officialdom: servility and blind subordination, which infects all subordinates and discredits the Party. The practice of appointments completely rejects the principle of collective work. It breeds irresponsibility.

Appointments by the leaders must be done away with and replaced by the elective principle at every level of the Party. Candidates shall be eligible to occupy responsible administrative positions only when they have been elected by conferences or congresses. Finally, in order to eliminate bureaucracy and make the Party more healthy, it is necessary to revert to the state of affairs where all the cardinal questions of Party activity and Soviet policy were submitted to the consideration of the rank and file, and only after that were supervised by the leaders. This was the state of things when the Party was forced to carry on its work in secret – even as late as the time of the signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty.

#### **4. Discuss The Problems Openly**

At present, the state of things is altogether different. In spite of the widely circulated promises made at the All Russian Party Conference held in September (1920) a no less important question than that of concessions was quite arbitrarily decided for the masses. Only due to the sharp controversy that arose within the Party centres themselves was the question of the trade unions brought out into the open, to be thrashed out in debate.

Wide publicity, freedom of opinion and discussion, the right to criticise within the Party and among the members of the trade unions – such are the decisive steps that can put an end to the prevailing system of bureaucracy. Freedom of criticism, right of different factions freely to present their views at Party meetings, freedom of discussion – are no longer the demands of the Workers' Opposition alone. Under the growing pressure from the masses, a whole series of measures that were demanded by the rank and file long before the Party Conference are now recognised and officially promulgated. One need only read the proposals of the Moscow Committee in regard to Party structure to be proud of the great influence that is being exerted on the Party centres. If it were not for the Workers' Opposition, the Moscow Committee would never have taken such a sharp 'turn to the left'. However, we must not overestimate this 'leftism', for it is only a declaration of principles to the Congress. It may happen, as it has many a time with decisions of our Party leaders during these years, that this radical declaration will soon be forgotten. As a rule, these decisions are accepted by our Party centres only just as the mass impetus is felt. As soon as life again swings into normal channels, the decisions are forgotten.

Did not this happen to the decision of the eighth Congress which resolved to free the Party of all elements who joined it for selfish motives, and to use discretion in accepting non-working class elements? What has become of the decision taken by the Party Conference in 1920, when it was decided to replace the practice of appointments by recommendations? Inequality in the Party still persists, in spite of repeated resolutions passed on this subject. Comrades who dare to disagree with decrees from above are still being persecuted. There are many such instances. If all these various Party decisions are not enforced, then it is necessary to eliminate the basic cause that interferes with their enforcement. We must remove from the Party those who are

afraid of publicity, strict accountability before the rank and file, and freedom of criticism.

Non-working class members of the Party, and those workers who fell under their influence, are afraid of all this. It is not enough to clean the Party of all non-proletarian elements by registration or to increase the control in time of enrolment, etc. It is also necessary to create opportunities for the workers to join the Party. It is necessary to simplify the admission of workers to the Party, to create a more friendly atmosphere in the Party itself, so that workers might feel themselves at home. In responsible Party officials they should not see superiors but more experienced comrades, ready to share with them their knowledge, experience and skill, and to consider seriously workers' needs and interests. How many comrades, particularly young workers, are driven away from the Party just because we manifest our impatience with them by our assumed superiority and strictness, instead of teaching them bringing them up in the spirit of Communism? Besides the spirit of bureaucracy, an atmosphere of officialdom finds a fertile ground in our Party. If there is any comradeship in our Party it exists only among the rank and file members.

##### 5. Historical Necessity of The Opposition

The task of the Party congress is to take into account this unpleasant reality. It must ponder over the question: Why is the Workers' Opposition insisting on introducing equality, on eliminating all privileges in the Party, and on placing under a stricter responsibility to the masses those administrative officials who are elected by them? In its struggle for establishing democracy in the Party, and for the elimination of all bureaucracy, the Workers' Opposition advances three cardinal demands:

(1) Return to the principle of election all along the line with the elimination of all bureaucracy, by making all responsible officials answerable to the masses.

(2) Introduce wide publicity within the Party, both concerning general questions and where individuals are involved. Pay more attention to the voice of the rank and file (wide discussion of all questions by the rank and file and their summarizing by the leaders; admission of any member to the meetings of Party centres, except when the problems discussed require particular secrecy). Establish freedom of opinion and expression (giving the right not only to criticise freely during discussions, but to use funds for publication of literature proposed by different Party factions).

(3) Make the Party more of a workers' Party. Limit the number of those who fill offices, both in the Party and the Soviet institutions at the same time.

A correct solution to the question will be if we succeed in closely linking the party along the whole line, not only with the Soviet bodies, but also with the trade unions. Here, a person working in both positions not only does not threaten a deviation of the party's policy from the purity of the party line, but, on the contrary, gives the party class stability against the influence of world capitalism in the coming era (through trade agreements and concessions).

To create such a Central Committee with 'workers spirit' means to create such a Central Committee, where representatives of the lower ranks, wedded to the masses, would cease to play the role of 'ceremonial generals' at a merchant wedding, and in fact would be inextricably linked with the broad non-party members of the working masses in trade unions and manage to take into account, sum up the slogans the moment, the needs, the

aspirations of the class and would direct the party's policy along the class line.

This last demand is particularly important. Our Party must not only build Communism but prepare and educate the masses for a prolonged period of struggle against world capitalism, which may take on unexpected new forms. It would be childish to imagine that, having repelled the treason of the White Guards and of Imperialism on the military fronts, we will be free from the danger of a new attack from world capital, which is striving to seize Soviet Russia by roundabout ways, to penetrate into our life, and use the Soviet Republic for its own ends. This is the great danger that we must stand guard against. And herein lies the problem for our Party: how to meet the enemy well-prepared, how to rally all the proletarian forces around clear-cut class issues (the other groups of the population always gravitate to capitalism). It is the duty of our leaders to prepare for this new page of our revolutionary history

It will only be possible to find correct solutions to these questions when we succeed in uniting the Party all along the line, not only together with the Soviet institutions, but with the trade unions as well. The filling up of offices in party and trade unions not only tends to deviate Party policy from clear-cut class lines but also renders the Party susceptible to the influences of world capitalism during this coming epoch, influences exerted through concessions and trade agreements. To make the Central Committee one that the workers feel is their own is to create a Central Committee wherein representatives of the lower layers connected with the masses would not merely play the role of upgrading generals', or a merchant's wedding part. The Committee should be closely bound with the wide non-party working masses in the trade unions. It would thereby be enabled to formulate the slogans of the time, to express the workers'

needs, their aspirations, and to direct the policy of the Party along class lines. Such are the demands of the Workers' Opposition. Such is its historic task. And whatever derisive remarks the leaders of our Party may employ, the Workers' Opposition is today the only vital active force with which the Party is compelled to contend, and to which it will have to pay attention.

Is the Opposition necessary? Is it necessary, on behalf of the liberation of the workers throughout the world from the yoke of capital, to welcome its formation? Or is it an undesirable movement, detrimental to the fighting energy of the Party, and destructive to its ranks? Every comrade who is not prejudiced against the Opposition and who wants to approach the question with an open mind and to analyse it, even if not in accordance with what the recognised authorities tell him, will see from these brief outlines that the Opposition is useful and necessary. It is useful primarily because it has awakened slumbering thought. During these years of the revolution, we have been so preoccupied with our pressing affairs that we have ceased to appraise our actions from the stand-point of principle and theory. We have been forgetting that the proletariat can commit grave mistakes and not only during the period of Struggle for political power. It can turn to the morass of opportunism. Even during the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat such mistakes are possible, particularly when on all sides we are surrounded by the stormy waves of imperialism and when the Soviet Republic is compelled to act in a capitalist environment. At such times, our leaders must be not only wise, (statesman-like) politicians. They must also be able to lead the Party and the whole working class along the line of class creativeness. They must prepare it for a prolonged struggle against the new forms of penetration of the Soviet Republic by the bourgeois influences of world capitalism. Be ready, be clear – but along class lines ;

such must be the slogan of our Party, and now more than ever before.

The Workers' Opposition has put these questions on the order of the day, rendering thereby an historic service. The thought begins to move. Members begin to analyse what has already been done. Wherever there is criticism, analysis, wherever thought moves and works, there is life, progress, advancement forward towards the future. There is nothing more frightful and harmful than sterility of thought and routine. We have been retiring into routine, and might inadvertently have gone off the direct class road leading to Communism, if it were not for the Workers' Opposition injecting itself into the situation at a time when our enemies were about to burst into joyful laughter. At present this is already impossible. The Congress, and the Party, will be compelled to contend with the point of view expressed by the Workers' Opposition. They will either compromise with it or make essential concessions under its influence and pressure. The second service of the Workers' Opposition is that it has brought up for discussion the question as to who, after all, shall be called upon to create the new forms of economy. Shall it be the technicians and men of affairs, who by their psychology are bound up with the past, together with Soviet officials and some Communists scattered among them, or shall it be working class collectives, represented by the unions?

The Workers' Opposition has said what has long ago been printed in the Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels: the building of Communism can and must be the work of the toiling masses themselves. The building of Communism belongs to the workers. Finally, the Workers' Opposition has raised its voice against bureaucracy. It has dared to say that bureaucracy binds the wings of self-activity and the creativeness of the working class; that it deadens thought, hinders initiative and

experimenting in the sphere of finding new approaches to production ; in a word that it hinders the development of new forms for production and life. Instead of a system of bureaucracy, the Workers' Opposition proposes a system of self-activity for the masses. In this respect, the Party leaders even now are making concessions and 'recognising' their deviations as being harmful to Communism and detrimental to working class interests (the rejection of centralism). The Tenth Congress, we understand, will make another series of concessions to the Workers' Opposition. Thus, in spite of the fact that the Workers' Opposition appeared as a mere group inside the Party only a few months ago, it has already fulfilled its mission. It has compelled the leading Party centres to listen to the workers' sound advice. At presents whatever might be the wrath toward the Workers' Opposition, it has the historical future to support it.

Just because we believe in the vital forces of our Party, we know that after some hesitation, resistance and devious political moves, our Party will ultimately again follow that path which has been blazed by the elemental forces of the proletariat. Organised as a class, there will be no split. If some groups leave the Party, they will not be the ones who make up the Workers' Opposition. Those will fall out who attempt to evolve into principles the temporary deviations from the spirit of the Communist programme, that were forced upon the Party by the prolonged civil war and hold to them as if they were the essence of our political line of action.

All those in the Party who have been accustomed to reflect the class viewpoint of the ever-growing proletariat will absorb and digest everything that is wholesome, practical and sound in the Workers' Opposition. Not in vain will the rank-and-file worker speak with assurance and reconciliation: 'Ilyich (Lenin) will ponder, he will think it over, he will listen to us. And then he will

decide to turn the Party rudder toward the Opposition. Ilyich will be with us yet'.

The sooner the Party leaders take into account the Opposition's work and follow the road indicated by the rank-and-file members, the quicker shall we overcome the crisis in the Party. And the sooner shall we step over the line beyond which humanisms having freed itself from objective economic laws and taking advantage of all the richness and knowledge of common working-class experience, will consciously begin to create the human history of the Communist epoch.

Enver Hoxha

### **Yugoslav "Self-Administration"**

"Self-administration" and the Anarchist Views on the State.

#### **The National Question in Yugoslavia**

In Yugoslavia organs of State power as genuine representatives of the people do not exist. There only exists the bureaucratic system called "the system of delegates", which is presented as the alleged bearer of the system of state power, and that is why no elections for deputies to the organs of State power are held. The Titoites want to justify this fact by arguing that the representative organs are allegedly expressions of bourgeois parliamentarism and of the Soviet socialist State which, according to them, Stalin had allegedly turned into an institution of bureaucracy and technocracy. The experience of the Soviets of the worker and peasant deputies, set up by Lenin based on the immense experience of the Paris Commune was disregarded, the Yugoslavian revisionists labelled it "forms of state organising which create personal power".

Developing the revisionist idea of "specific socialism", the Titoites sometime in the fifties declared in the face of the whole world that they would ultimately renounce the socialist state system and had replaced it with a new system, the system of "self-administrative socialism", in which socialism and the state are alien for each other. This revisionist "discovery" was nothing less than a copy of Proudhon's and Bakunin's anarchist theories about the "workers self-management" and the "workers' factories", which have long been exposed as crude corruption of of Marx and Lenin's true ideas about the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Karl Marx writes:

Between capitalist and communist society lies **the period of the revolutionary transformation** of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which **the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.**

The political system of **“socialist self-administration”** **has not only nothing in common** with the dictatorship of the proletariat but is even opposed to it. This system is constructed after the model of the administration of the United States of America. Kardelj himself wrote about the Yugoslav “system of self-administration”: ... we could say that this system is more similar to the organisation of the executive power in the United States of American than in Western Europe...” (p. 235)

From this follows clearly that the fact, that the organisation of the Yugoslav government is a copy of the organisation of capitalist governments, is not denied but what could be discussed is the question: which capitalist government has been imitated the most, the American or one of the Western European governments. And for this discussion Kardelj provides the solution when he says: the organisation of the executive power of the United States of America has been chosen as model.

The Yugoslav revisionists' **views about the state are through and through anarchist.** As is well-known anarchism demands the immediate elimination of every form of state, so of the dictatorship of the proletariat, too. And the Yugoslavian revisionists have eliminated the dictatorship of the proletariat and in order to justify this betrayal they speak of two different phases of socialism – “state socialism” and the “true humanitarian socialism”. According to their opinion the first phase contains the first years after the victory of the revolution, in which the dictatorship of the proletariat exists, which

expresses itself in the "etatist-bureaucratic" state, just like in capitalism. The second phase is the phase of the overcoming of the "etatist-bureaucratic state" and its replacement through "direct democracy". With those views the Titoites not only deny the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat in socialism, but also contrast the terms socialist state, dictatorship of the proletariat and socialist democracy with each other.

They pay no attention to the classics of Marxism-Leninism which teach that the socialist state is continuously consolidated during the whole historical period of transition from capitalism to communism. Therefore E. Kardelj writes that society in Yugoslavia is less and less based on the role of the state apparatus. According to him the state in Yugoslavia is allegedly withering away.

But with what does Kardelj replace the role of the state apparatus? He replaces it by the "initiative of the workers"! He expresses it this way: "... the further functioning of our society will be based less and less on the role of the state apparatus and more and more on the power and initiative of the workers..." (p.8) An absurd judgement! To speak of the initiative of the workers means that the workers above all have to be free and organised, inspired by clear directives, have to take measures to implement those initiatives. Who concerns themselves in Yugoslavia with organising and inspiring the workers through clear directions? The "self-administrated community", says Kardelj in his abstract judgement. He leaves the leading part in this sort of community to the individual "in the united self-administrated work of his interests". What is meant by this "self-administrated unity" of the individual's interests, which stands in the centre of Yugoslav society, is nowhere clearly explained. But what emerges of this idea is bourgeois individualism which puts the absolute rights of the individual in society and its

complete independence of this society, the priority of personal interests over the interests of society first.

According to this "theoretician", who permits himself to such judgement the consolidation of the state and its apparatus is characteristic for the forms of "government property of the socialist relations of productions..." (p.8). In Yugoslavia in contrast, he says, the process of consolidation of the "self-administrative" role of the working class will develop in contrast to the state. According to this "philosopher" man cannot be free and master of his fate in a genuine socialist state where Marxist-Leninist science and the Leninist revolutionary practice are applied but is transformed into a machine. In Yugoslav "self-administration", in contrast, the worker allegedly assumes great importance and precisely in this "self-administration", in the "democratic mechanism of delegation of Yugoslav society", he understands his great role! Which classes do these state organs represent, which ideology guides them, on what principles have they built their activity and to what forum do they render account? Of course, no clear answer to these all these questions can be found because any accurate answer would shed light on Yugoslavia's capitalist political system.

Kardeij sticks to his anarchist positions when he writes, making no distinction at all about what state, party or system he is referring to, attacking the State in general for being inhuman: "Neither the state, nor the system, nor the political party can bring happiness to man. Man, alone can bring happiness to himself" (p. 8).

Here the tendencies for spontaneity in the **anti-Marxist theory of "socialist self-administration"** are brought to surface quite clearly, according to which the working class needs not organise itself in the party or the State to achieve its aspirations but will

find the happiness it looks for even while wandering in the dark as time goes by.

To anticipate the question: "If the state is unnecessary why is it not eliminated in Yugoslavia then?" Kardelj wrote: "The State... must interpose in the role of the arbiter only in those situations when the self-governing agreement cannot be achieved but it is essential from the aspect of social interests that a decision is made" (p. 23). And to prove that allegedly the need for state arbitration to settle disagreements is rare, Kardelj says: "The free exchange of labour has an essential influence on reducing the antagonisms between physical and mental work. In this relations mental work is no longer superior to physical work but is only one of the components of the free united labour and of the free exchange of different forms of the results of labour" (p. 24). Upon reading these phrases, the question arises in everybody's mind: is it possible that the author talks about the Yugoslav social order here? Since when have the antagonisms between mental and physical work been reduced in Yugoslavia?!

The reality of development in Yugoslavia proves the opposite. There are essential distinctions between mental and physical work which cannot be reduced by words. It is really astonishing that there is talk about the reduction of antagonisms between mental and physical work in the Yugoslav state, it is known that alone the wage differentials between a worker and an intellectual there, not to speak about other distinctions - have reached a ratio of one to twenty, if not more.

Kardelj considers "self-administration in the united work" as "...the genuine material basis for self-administration in society, too, that is to say, in the socio-political communities which exercise state power from the commune up to the federation, as well as for the realisation of the democratic rights of working people and citizens in the running of the state, or respectively, of

society. Self-government is also the material basis for the development of the worker as a creative individual in the utilization of all sorts of social means..." (p. 24) and many other such phrases.

Seeking to present the so-called self-administration as the material premise for man's happiness, which the great minds of Yugoslavia have allegedly "discovered" for us, Kardelj resorts to twisted phrases and ecclesiastical language, preaching a long sermon but essentially saying nothing. He lines up contradictory ideas about "scientific socialism" and uses lengthy expressions in order to give his words an alleged profound philosophical meaning.

But how is the Yugoslav political system carried out in practice? When it comes to answering this question, Kardelj is forced to admit: "In this respect there are excessive weak points in the system. A whole series of weaknesses in the functioning of the organizations and institutions of our political system rightfully gives the impression that powerful sources of bureaucracy and technocracy are still operating, that our administration is complicated and that it is therefore overgrown with bureaucracy, that some organs and organizations are secluding themselves, that there are many gaps and cases of duplication of work, that the forms of democratic communication between self-governed and state organs and the entire social structure are weakly developed, that we hold many useless and fruitless meetings, that the meetings and decisions are frequently insufficiently prepared from the professional viewpoint, that in the fight for his rights the citizen often has difficulties to overcome the administrative obstacles etc." (p. 193). So if the system of "self-administration" chokes on bureaucracy, if the state and administrative organs are secluded, make worthless decisions and shut out the citizens who want them to do

something about their many troubles - then who, apart from the Tito clique, needs this system? How can the Yugoslav citizens govern themselves when they cannot overcome the "administrative obstacles"? Despite all the great efforts of the devil not to show his cloven foot, despite all the reservations and efforts to round things off by the Titoite ideologist in order to cover up the dark sides of his system – even what he admits is enough to realize the truth.

Kardelj writes: "Both the structure of delegates' assemblies and the way decisions are taken there are organized in such a way that they in principle ensure the leading role of the united labour in the whole system of making state decisions" (pp. 24-25). With these words he is trying to create a focus to show that the "delegates' assemblies", which in reality are very similar to the assemblies set up by capitalist trade unions, where the trade union members indulge in idle talk, can allegedly exercise state functions. Therefore, according to him, the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat is superfluous.

Here, of course, it is not a matter of replacing the name of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which terrifies the bourgeoisie and the revisionists, with another name: "delegates' assemblies". No, this here is about changing the class character of the socialist state, so that not the working class but the new bourgeoisie holds power. It is not difficult to see that these positions aim at justifying the course of returning to capitalism and, as far as possible, the Titoite betrayal.

In order to present their notorious system of "socialist self-administration" as correct and acceptable, the Titoites oppose it to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat. For the Titoites all other political systems, without making distinction between capitalism and socialism, are "dogmatic". First, they call their phantasms "system of socialist

self-administration", then, in order to demonstrate the superiority of their system, they compare it with the capitalist social order.

Of course, the Yugoslav revisionists cannot fail to "find fault" with the parliamentary political system of bourgeois society, which Kardelj defines as a "multi-party system", for otherwise they would expose themselves as advocates of bourgeois parliamentarianism, which Marx and Lenin sternly criticised in their time. Therefore, they declare that it would be a mistake to consider this political form of the bourgeois state as having a universal and eternal character. The whole world knows that Kardelj was not the first to "criticize" the bourgeois ideologists' notorious thesis about the universal and eternal character of capitalism. In refuting the views of social-democracy the classics of Marxism-Leninism proved scientifically that the capitalist system is by no means universal and eternal, that it is doomed to die, that the capitalist state, which is the offspring and bulwark of this system hostile to the people, must be destroyed to its foundations and in its place the true socialist system must be established, but not a bastardized system which starts from capitalism and returns again to capitalism, as the Yugoslav political system of "self-administration" does.

Kardelj "criticizes" the bourgeois parliamentary system, but lightly and gently, because it hurts him to do so and therefore, immediately after criticizing it, he praises its contribution to the democratic development of mankind to the skies and makes a fetish of it. In order to exaggerate this contribution in such a way that the reaction character of today's bourgeois parliament pales into insignificance and in particular to show the "organic link between parliamentarianism and democratic human rights", for the first time he quotes (or rather mutilates) Marx: "The parliamentary regime lives on debate, then how can it ban

discussion? Every social interest and institution is transformed into general ideas here, is treated as idea so how is it possible then for any interest or institution to stand above all ideas and impose itself like a religious dogma?... A parliamentary regime allows the majority to decide everything, how is it possible then that the overwhelming majority outside parliament does not want to take decisions?"

This quotation from Marx is like a square peg in a round hole in the context of this book, therefore it can hardly serve to prove what Kardelj wants. Marx's idea, in the tricky way it was quoted by this revisionist, out of context and mutilated, casts doubt on the undeniable fact that Marx was absolutely opposed to the venal and rotten bourgeois parliamentarianism.

This attempt on the author's part is unsuccessful because everybody knows Marx's stance who, when criticizing the bourgeois parliament and the bourgeois theory of the division of powers, never said that representative institutions should be done away with and that the principle of elections should be abandoned, as it was done in Yugoslavia. In fact, he wrote that **in the proletarian state such representative organs** should be set up and operate that are not "talking shops" but real working institutions, built and acting as

"...a working body, executive and legislative at the same time." (K. Marx / F. Engels, Selected works,,vol. 2, p. 544, Tirana 1975, Alb. ed.)

Bourgeois parliamentarianism has gained "great strength" because, as the author of the book claims, socialist practice, with the exception of Yugoslavia, has been unable to develop new forms of democratic life corresponding to socialist relations of production more rapidly and extensively. The new form of democratic life, according to Kardelj, has allegedly been realised

under "socialist self-administration" which crossed the Rubicon of class state power of the owners and of the technocratic-monopolistic managers of capital. One can only be amazed at him describing all the efforts of the democratic forces to find forms of democracy as "artificial constructions" of the bourgeois Parliament, as attempts to unite "several things that cannot be united", whereas he calls the constructions of Yugoslavia's "socialist self-administration", these bastardized grafts of the bourgeois-revisionist forms of government, original and socialist! If there ever was fraud in the construction of governing it is to be found in the first place in the anti-Marxist and anti-democratic theories of the Titoites' self-administration. Regardless of the numerous deceptive statements made about it, Yugoslav "self-administration" is a copy of bourgeois parliamentarianism and of capitalist relations of production; it is a chaotic appendage of the world capitalist system, of the structure and superstructure of this system.

"Our socialist democracy", writes Kardelj, "would not be an all-embracing system of democratic relations without the relevant solution of the problems of relations among Yugoslavia's nations and nationalities" (p. 171). Although the revisionist ideologist would have had to explain at this occasion how the political system of "socialist self-administration" has solved the problem of nations and nationalities in Yugoslavia, he forwent so widely around this major problem, so serious and delicate for his federation, that after reading his book of 323 pages one can barely recall that there was any talk about nations and nationalities.

How about the problem of nations and nationalities in Yugoslavia? The Yugoslav Federation inherited deep-rooted conflicts in this field. The policies of the Great-Serbian Kings and reactionary chauvinistic circles in Yugoslavia was such that, it

historically stirred up conflicts and hostility among nations and nationalities.

After Second World War, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia launched the slogan "unity - fraternity" but this slogan proved quite inadequate to solve the differences inherited from the past, therefore the old conflicts, the unrestrained craving for domination over others did not disappear. Tito and the renegade clique around him did not carry out a Marxist-Leninist national policy in regard to the tendencies of republics and regions to break away from the Federation. On the contrary, the relations among nationalities remained the same as in the time of the Kings and in regard to some nationalities the genocide went on as before. This policy served to fuel the hatred and quarrels among the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia. The "unity" and "fraternity" of peoples about which there is a great deal of talk in Yugoslavia, has never been presented on the correct basis of the economic, political, social and cultural equality of nations and nationalities.

Without achieving equality in these fields the national question in Yugoslavia cannot be solved correctly. For three decades now "self-administrative socialism" has, apart from its demagogy about the "self-governing community of nations and nationalities of a new type", done nothing about the implementation of the sovereign rights of these different nations and nationalities in the republics and regions of Yugoslavia. The Kosova region, for example, with an Albanian population almost three times bigger than the population of the Republic of Montenegro, has a distinct economic, political, social and cultural backwardness in comparison with the other regions of Yugoslavia. In the larger Republics, too, impermissible distinctions exist in all fields compared with the other Republics. This situation is the weakest spot which is shaking the Federation

of the Yugoslav revisionists to its foundations. Pious hopes about a solution to the old and new differences among Yugoslavia's nations are futile.

From an objective and scientific analysis of this very difficult and troubled situation, the incontestable conclusion emerges that the national question in Yugoslavia will not be solved unless Marxism-Leninism is implemented there, unless the capitalist so-called self-administrative order is overthrown.

The Titoite renegades feel this danger and therefore, if they have to mention the problems of nations and nationalities, they try to bridge the gap with pompous statements without getting to the crux of the problems, or by seeking false testimony from other revisionists, as they did when they gave great publicity to the declarations of the Chinese revisionists about the Marxist-Leninist solution of the national problem in Yugoslavia.

In words the revisionists may present the relations among the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia as they like, but the bitter truth of this problem will still haunt them beyond death.

The national question in Yugoslavia will be solved by the peoples of the present Federation themselves and not by those who, regardless of what they say, in fact are still pursuing the reactionary and chauvinistic policy of their predecessors.

Continuing his explanations about the policy of the Yugoslav state, the cunning revisionist Kardelj claims that this policy is "... no longer the monopoly of professional politicians and political cartels behind the scenes" but instead it becomes "a matter of direct activity and of direct decision-making by the self-governors and their organs..." (p. 25). Behold, Kardelj wants to say, henceforth do not criticise us for betraying the interests of the working class anymore because the Yugoslav worker is master of the policy of the country and of the defense of his "self-

administrative" interests, unlike in the other States where professional politicians are the masters. And here, too, in bad faith he makes no difference between capitalist and socialist countries but lumps them all together because in this manner it is easier to present black as white.

Kardelj knows that in order to realise the dishonest aims he has in mind he has to trivialize the manifestations which expose the "self-administrative" reality in every way. Therefore he belittles the fact that the Yugoslav worker has no chances of realizing his rights in the political and economic field and explains that this "is due to a series of objective and subjective reasons – among which, undoubtedly, the still relatively low level of education and culture and the level of the application of science belongs - the worker is not yet able to dominate, orientate, or completely control in a conscious and creative manner all the processes which the his social and economic position imposes on him." (p. 27). It is obvious that this was written in order to defend anti-worker and anti-socialist positions. At present the Yugoslav worker understands nothing of this illusory theory and he also does not see any of these false and absurd ideas, which are unacceptable to him, being implemented in practice.

Since the low cultural and scientific level of the workers is an obstacle, as Kardelj says, the main role in the "self-administrative" society is played by the educated and skilled people, who are the ruling elite in this "socialist community". Under these circumstances' decisions will be taken in most instances precisely by this elite, by the cultured element of the new bourgeoisie which makes the law in Yugoslavia. Who is to blame that the elite is becoming prominent and the role of the workers is diminishing? There is no doubt the blame lies within the very social system which generates the new capitalist class and provides it with the possibilities to strengthen itself

economically at the expense of the workers and become educated, while the working class is left at a low level. Kardelj cannot avoid mentioning the fact that in practice decisions are taken by a relatively small percentage of people in Yugoslavia. However, he has nothing to say about the fact that this is precisely the way how the political monopoly of the elite in taking decisions and in the division of the income in the enterprises of "socialist self-administration" is created. This political monopoly, which the Yugoslav revisionists allegedly guard themselves against and combat, is particularly striking in their so-called political system of "socialist self-administration".

In the "self-administrated" society, as Kardelj expresses it "...instead of the old relationships: the worker - the state - social activities, a new relationship must inevitably be constituted between the workers engaged directly in production and the workers in social activities." (p. 23). According to him, building social relations by the way of a socialist regime where scientific socialism is applied, where there is unity between the workers directly involved in production and the workers engaged in social activities, where there is vigorous socio-political activity and an organization of the economy in which the principal role is played by the working people organized in their socialist state is not the correct way. The correct way, according to Kardelj, is that of building "new" social relations without the participation of the state!

These ideas are an expression of pure anarchism. All these phrases are only there to obscure anything good a genuine socialist regime offers and to treacherously claim that in Yugoslavia they are allegedly marching towards the unity of the workers and intellectuals through the "free exchange of labour", which reduces their antagonism as if by magic.

In Kardelj's theory there is not any mention of the violent overthrow of the capitalist state, of the seizure of power by the working class and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, nor can there be. Although he quotes Marx's words that "at given moments we have to resort to violence which will finally constitute the power of labour" he does this only to prove that Marx allegedly leaned more towards the triumph of the proletarian revolution by peaceful means, while considering violence an exception and making it conditional on some particular social circumstances. And with such sophistry Kardelj seeks to create the impression that the working class nowadays can achieve its historical interests not through revolution, but in alliance with the various political parties of the capitalist countries. Kardelj has copied this cunningly way of quotation to pit Marx against Marx in regard to the possibility of the peaceful transition to socialism from his revisionist predecessors, against whom Lenin wrote:

"The reference to what Marx... said about **the possibility of peaceful transition to socialism... is the argument of a sophist**, which means in ordinary words, of an imposter, who is juggling with quotations and references for his trickery." (V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 28, p. 107, Alb. ea.)

Kardelj needs these falsifications in order to lend a hand to the "Eurocommunists", with whom he is in complete accord. The revisionist parties of Italy, France and Spain have declared that they will allegedly achieve socialism through the development of bourgeois democracy and freedoms, through the force of the ballot in parliamentary elections. According to the "Eurocommunists" the ability of the working class will be expressed in the question to what extent it will gain the key positions in the structure of capitalist society and the state, as

well as in the running of society. This way, they say, the transformation of the character of the capitalist relations of production to "self-administrative" or "socialist" relations of production will become possible. It is precisely on this issue that the Titoite theory and the theory of "Eurocommunism" are united. The "Eurocommunists" are obliged to accept European bourgeois political pluralism and the unity among bourgeois parties in order to - allegedly through reforms - be able to ensure many rights for working class and then, enable the transformation to "socialist" society on this way. Kardelj calls these efforts of his friends "structural changes", which must exert without doubt such an influence that the process develops and thereby transforms both the position and role of the parliament itself.

Therefore Kardelj's theory claims that the "communist" parties of Western Europe under the conditions of the crisis of the capitalist system, while preserving the parliamentary system whose democratic achievements - as he says - cannot be denied, must find an appropriate way to secure an alliance with the broadest "democratic" forces for the working class. Through this sort of alliance, according to revisionist logic, a more favourable "democratic" situation can be created in the parliamentary system and in the long run the parliamentary system - who knows how - will be "transformed" into a decisive power of the people! This is the course Titoism sets for the other revisionist parties to come to power on the peaceful way.

In the bourgeois States, however, power is in the hands of the capitalists, the national businesses and cartels and multinational companies. These forces of capital have the main keys to the management of the economy and the state firmly in their hands, they make the law and through a fraudulent democratic process they appoint the government, which is under their command

and acts as an official administrator of their wealth. The bourgeoisie does not safeguard its power in order to hand it over to the "Eurocommunists" but in order to protect its class interests, even with bloodshed, if necessary. To fail to see this reality, which life is confirming every day, means to close your eyes and indulge in day-dreaming. If the "Eurocommunists" do indeed succeed in gaining one or more positions in the bourgeois government they will in fact get there as representatives of capitalism, just like the other bourgeois political parties and not as representatives of the proletariat.

**The bourgeois pseudo-democracy, the parliament which allegedly chooses the government, is nothing but a puppet in the hands of the power of capital which operates "behind the scenes"** and dictates in various forms everything from outside. The different forms of the real power exercised "behind the scenes" get their nuances through the various parties represented in parliament as well as the trade-unions which allegedly fight to defend the workers. In reality all the bourgeois-revisionist parties and trade-unions in the capitalist state, regardless of the names they assume, are dependent on the owning class.

Kardelj says the "Eurocommunists" are right when they link their political struggle for "socialism" with the defence of the institutions of pluralism of political forces, because, as he puts it, "...in the present situation of the countries of Western Europe, this is the only realistic road to the unity of the forces of the working class, as well as to link it with the other democratic forces of the peoples. Only this can essentially strengthen the social and political positions of the working class, i.e., make it capable of not just criticizing society but also changing it." (p. 41).

Expressing the links, solidarity and unity of the League of "Communists" of Yugoslavia with the "Eurocommunists" and all the other revisionist parties which in one way or another, in

this or that form, defend capitalism and fight the revolution and true socialism, Kardelj says: "... we have reason to defend the parliamentary system and political pluralism against the attacks of the reactionary forces of bourgeois society..." (p. 61). This "ideologist" wants to say that the working class and the pseudo-communists of Western Europe are right to unite with the capitalist institutions, parliament and the bourgeois government because through this union and only in this way the working class will become capable of changing society!

From the facts mentioned above it becomes clear that the Yugoslav "self-administrative" society is for the close alliance or fusion of capitalism and socialism, because the present-day capitalists allegedly have no objection to the building of a new society in which the working class will gain the ability to fully assume its democratic "self-administrative" rights. Hence it is not difficult to understand that the author of the book recommends a transition from the "consumer society", in which the technocrats have allegedly seized power, to a **"self-administrative" society** in which "the individuals are associated in 'common labour' " - and this transition can be called a triumph of socialism then! There is nothing resembling genuine scientific socialism in these judgements and stands of cunning renegades. As loyal servants of the capitalist bourgeoisie, the Titoites deny the proletarian revolution and the class struggle with their writings. In claiming that the "consumer society" can be transformed into socialism gradually without violent revolution but "by the Holy Spirit" they seek to disarm the proletariat and smash its Marxist-Leninist Party.

In the capitalist countries, "reveals" Kardelj, the executive power is linked with political forces which act and impose their policy from outside parliament. Here again Kardelj is saying nothing new but simply repeating the idea as his own observation, which

was expressed by Lenin in his masterful exposure of the falsity of the bourgeois democracy. It is a fine thing to assimilate and repeat Lenin's ideas, but it is neither the worry about Lenin nor Leninism that concerns Mr Kardelj. He is afraid of the "politicism" as well as of the "political monopoly" of Leninism, although it pleases him "to politicise" others and make them believe that under capitalism the executive power is really manipulated by forces outside the state organs, whereas in Yugoslavia the Presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Federal Executive Council which constitutes the government, have obviously escaped this danger as if through a miracle because they have divided the competences "in a precise manner" (p, 235). Apart from this the political strength in Yugoslavia is, according to Kardelj, concentrated in "... the delegates' assembly and moreover not just in this but in the interconnection of the assembly with the whole social structure" (p. 235). This "delegates' assembly", in regard to its "full powers and authority», reminds of the so-called councils of local self-government in the bourgeois countries, which Lenin has ridiculed saying that they

"... may be 'autonomous' only in minor matters, may be independent only in questions of tinning washbowls."  
(V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 10, p. 366, Alb. ed.)

It is said that **under "workers' self-administration"** the "delegates" voice their opinions freely. In theory, of course, not only the "delegates" but also the workers have all rights, but in practice they enjoy none at all. In the political system of Yugoslav **"self-government"** **everything is decided from above and nothing from below**. The protests of the Yugoslav workers against the enrichment and corruption of leading officials, their demands for the elimination of economic and social distinctions, the abolition of private enterprises, restraining of political and

moral corruption, protests against national discrimination etc., are well-known today. The book is full of long-drawn-out phrases which are intended to make the reader weary and thus make him believe the abstract idea that "socialist self-government exists in Yugoslavia" and that "workers' self-administration reigns", at a time when the workers have nothing to say. The keys to the government of the country are held by the new Yugoslav bourgeoisie which operates from **rightist positions while disguising itself with leftist slogans.**

“socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously in all countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries” Lenin

“...when we are told that the victory of socialism is possible only on a world scale, we regard this merely as an attempt, a particularly hopeless attempt, on the part of the bourgeoisie and its voluntary and involuntary supporters to distort the irrefutable truth.” Lenin

